

Next week, Agile Penne's New Story, "The Detective's Ward: or, the Fortunes of a Bowery Girl."

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DREAMS.

BY E. E. REXFORD.

How far away the future seems!
We look down the years,
And dream our sweet and happy dreams,
And never think of tears.

We dream of love to brighten life,
And peace, to give us rest;
And quite forget that care and strife
Must touch each earthly breast.

Ah, well! Our dreams are only dreams;
And never quite come true;
And life is never what it seems,
Stretched out before our view.

But I am glad that dreams are ours.
They help us to forget,
Although one thinks, in waking hours,
Of them, in vain regret.

The dreamer finds a little rest;
A respite, sweet, but brief;
So dream away. To dream is best,
Forgetting care and grief.

In the Web:

THE GIRL-WIFE'S TRIALS.

A HEART AND LIFE ROMANCE OF THE CRESCENT CITY.

BY EDWIN SOUTH.

CHAPTER X.

DID SHE LOVE HIM?

It was a bright, cheery morning, early in February. The leaves were coming out fresh and beautiful again, and the grass was strewn with those which had just fallen from the branches.

Blanche Davenant was seated in her chamber, reading carefully a letter she had just received from Major Cecil. It was full of interest to her, as it would have been to any woman similarly circumstanced. It contained an avowal of love for her, and was written with that delicacy which, to the cultivated gentleman, is so natural and becoming.

He told her frankly that he was fully aware of her engagement to Mark Blanchard; that he had no hope of winning a place in her heart, and that, knowing this, he felt, oh, so lonely, and had quite made up his mind to leave New Orleans forever.

"I will be with you before noon, to-day, to say good-by and God bless you."

This was the concluding sentence, and when Blanche had read it through she pressed the missive to her heart and fell to weeping. In those two months in which she had known Graham Cecil, she had learned to prize him very highly. He was so kind, so considerate, so attentive, and so wholly unlike Mark Blanchard, that she was not quite sure she did not more than esteem him. Her affianced husband had not secured her heart. She felt sure of this now, although she had not the courage to tell him so. And, after all, what should she do when Graham Cecil would go away and leave her to her fate?

This was the query that she put to her heart on that bright February morning, and finding how empty was her life—how void of promise her future was—she could do nothing but weep bitter, bitter tears.

She was lying upon a sofa, her face buried in the cushions, and her cheeks all wet and tear-stained, when her father entered the room.

Colonel Davenant was greatly surprised. He had never before seen his child so grief-stricken, and it was with a tender hand he stroked her hair back, and, lifting her head up, kissed her fondly.

"What is the matter, Blanche darling?" he asked. "What has happened?"

She could not speak at first; her tears were falling now heavier than ever. Although she managed to reply:

"Oh, father, I am afraid I do not love Mark as I should. And—and I really do not know what to do. I'm so unhappy—so wretched."

"Why, my daughter," answered the old man, "I am shocked at this. I was under the impression that this union was acceptable to you. Had I ever had a suspicion even to the contrary, be sure I would not have permitted matters to have gone so far."

Colonel Davenant spoke solemnly, even sadly, and it was evident this revelation of his daughter caused him pain.

"Are you quite sure, Blanche, that this is not a whim; that, in short, you understand your heart?"

"I don't know," was the reply; "maybe it is only a notion. But, whatever it is, whether a whim or a reality, I know it has made me very wretched."

Again she bowed her head and wept. Colonel Davenant did not speak at once; he waited for her grief to spend its force, and then said, very calmly:

"My child, this is a very serious matter, and one that should not be treated lightly. Your happiness, and that of another is involved, and we should be very careful how we tread on dangerous ground. Remember, you have given your word—the sacred pledge of a lady, to marry this young man. He deeply loves you, and you should be very careful that you do not do him a grave injury."

Blanche looked her father straight in the eyes as he said this, and then replied:

"Yes, you are right. I have acted foolishly, and I will try to do better."

"But, understand this, my child," added the colonel, "I do not advise you to wed this man unless you think you can love him, and be to him a good and confiding wife."

She hung her head and answered in a low voice: "I will try to do my duty."

He took the sweet young face between his hands, and, looking into the depths of her soul-lit eyes, said:

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"Blanche, your sorrow at my departure is more than I had a right to expect, and I thank you for it."

"I know you will, my darling."

He kissed her still wet cheek, and, after promising to be home soon, started off to see an old banker friend on Carondelet street.

An hour later Blanche met Graham Cecil in the drawing-room. She was very calm and reserved, for she had nerved herself for this scene.

After talking a few moments about commonplace matters, Blanche ventured to remark:

"And so, major, you are going away?"

"Yes, Blanche; I am going away—for ever!"

She bit her lips; her eyes fell; that word forever rung through her brain with a pitiful sound. Neither spoke for an instant. The silence was becoming embarrassing, when Graham said:

"Blanche, you understand why I am going away. You know the secret that I have so carefully concealed from every eye, and you also know how hopeless that passion is. I have only come to say good-by. To say any thing else now would be worse than vain. I can only regret that, before I had an opportunity to convince you of my affection, you were already the promised wife of another. Such mistakes occur in life quite often, I suppose, and I will have to bear my disappointment as others have borne theirs. It will do you no harm, I hope, to know that, whatever may come to me in the future, no other person will ever have the place in my heart, now held by you."

She never uttered a word—not even when he had finished. Her heart was too full of love and pity for that man, whose voice trembled as he spoke, to admit of language, just then. Her head, with all its wealth of beautiful hair, dropped down low and lower, and, at last, the tears flooded her eyes, dimming their luster.

He looked down upon the bowed form, not knowing how to interpret her silence, until he caught sight of her tears, dropping like purest pearls upon the carpet.

"Blanche, your sorrow at my departure is more than I had a right to expect, and I thank you for it." He reached out his hand, and she took it without looking up.

"Good-by, my little friend; God bless you!"

He was turning away. He dare not stay longer; his voice was growing husky; his wild, earnest passion was struggling for speech; he was forgetting that Blanche Davenant was the spouse of another.

"Graham!" It was Blanche who spoke, and, in an instant, he was by her side.

She was now looking up calmly into his face. Remembering what she was to Mark Blanchard, her womanly sense of duty and dignity came back to her, and she felt strong again in the knowledge that she had a path marked out for her feet which duty and honor compelled her to tread.

"Graham Cecil, you have witnessed my weakness," she began; "you know now that you are very dear to me. But here it must all end. We can never hope to be anything to each other more than what we are."

"You do not love Mark Blanchard then?" asked Major Cecil, eagerly, his face lighting up with hope.

"I do not know. I respect Mark Blanchard, and myself, enough to keep my vow, I trust. Had I never seen you, I possibly would have loved him more. I shall try to do what is right. No one can ask more of me."

"Your decision does you credit, Blanche. I would almost as soon you had loved me, as prove false to a plighted troth. Now, however, I can ask—if any thing ever comes between your vow and its fulfillment, that you will let me know. Do you promise this?"

"I do," was the reply.

He raised the hand he held in his to his lips and kissed it.

"And now, Blanche Davenant—only woman that I ever loved—you are lost to me. Farewell, darling—farewell!"

He was gone! The bright sunlight lay in a golden patch on the velvet carpet where he stood but an instant since, and Blanche's eyes were riveted to the spot as if she hoped, by her aching gaze, to conjure him back again. The silence was very deep. The clock on the elaborately-carved mantelpiece was ticking so loudly that it seemed

to be growing stronger each second. Save this, and the beating of that poor girl's heart, there was nothing to fall upon the ear in all that splendid apartment.

With all its luxurious appointments, with all its rare embellishments, it now appeared vacant and void to her. That man who had just gone out forever had taken all the light with him; and, realizing this, she fell forward upon her face. Her hair, unloosened, rolled in rippling beauty where late Graham Cecil's footprints were, and her lips murmured: "Gone forever—never, never to come back again to me!"

CHAPTER XI.

IN THE STREETS!

It was a dark night. The rain fell in a thin mist; the streets were glistening under the gas-lights, and the gutters of New Orleans were filled with water to the very curbs. The swamp which stretched between the city and the lake was overflowed, and refused to take what the city gutters offered, while a stiff eastern breeze drove Pontchartrain's waters over the banks in all directions. It was a very cheerless night, and so thought Bradley Turner, as he stepped briskly along Perdido and turned into Dryades street.

His course lay toward Canal street, through those dens of infamy where women abound, but where virtue and innocence, alas! have no habitation.

Just as he passed the corner of Union, an old man came out of a house to the right, and fell forward upon the pavement. His head struck the bricks with such force that Turner thought his skull had been broken.

"Dead drunk, poor wretch!" was Brad's exclamation, as he stooped down and lifted up the old man's head.

"No, not drunk—only crazy," answered the stranger; "only crazy."

The fall had injured him seriously; the blood was flowing in a warm, scarlet current from a wound behind his left ear, and one side of his head was much bruised.

He was not drunk; Bradley saw that now, and, touched with compassion, he asked:

"What made you fall?"

"I am exhausted," was the reply. "I could not keep my feet longer. Oh, sir! I wish I was dead—I wish that fall had killed me outright."

"And I am precious glad it didn't," replied Turner. "Now, give me your hand. That's it. Now you are on your feet again."

The stranger was upon his feet, but his whole frame was quivering, and his eyes were burning as if the fire of madness had taken possession of the sockets.

He seemed scarcely to understand his position at first, but gradually his wandering senses returned, and he said, grasping Turner's hand:

"God bless you, my friend; you have done me a valuable service, and I wish I was able to repay you in something better than words."

"Seeing as I don't expect any pay," replied Turner, "you needn't give yourself much trouble on that score. What brought you into that house? Seems to me, if you'll pardon the boldness, that that ain't just the kind of a place for a respectable man to be found at this hour of the night."

"Misfortune brought me here, sir," was the answer; "but, it's a long story."

"If it is," put in Turner, "you had better not stop here to tell it. Where do you live?"

"Where do I live?"

"Yes, in what part of the city?"

"I have no home here. I live in Tennessee, but I have been here for five days, wandering the streets in search of a lost child, without eating, without sleeping, and, worse than all, without success."

Bradley Turner, with all his rough experience, was touched at this. The hopeless dejection of the old man, his faltering voice, so full of exquisite sadness, had awakened a tender chord in his own heart, and when the stranger reached out his hand and said, "Good-by," Turner promptly exclaimed:

"No, old man, you must come with me. Brad Turner is not rich, but he can give you a home for a while, and, maybe, he can help you to find your child."

The two men clasped each other's hands and looked into each other's faces.

This was a new role to poor, wayward, and sometimes, wicked Brad Turner, this turning philanthropist; and so he felt awkward, and a trifle shy, too, as he took the stranger's arm and led him away.

The two men bent their steps toward the house on Dauphin street, where we parted with Mangy and the old crone, on the night prior to Tillie's departure for Mexico.

Mangy was sitting in her little sitting-room, trying to read a French fiction. The rose-leaves in the carpet were glowing brightly, and the woeen vine-leaves were trailing their emerald beauty everywhere.

She had changed very much in those two months since we last saw her. Her whole demeanor was more subdued, and she no longer answered to the hideous abbreviation of her given name, to which Silas had accustomed her. Even Brad Turner had mastered his passion for short names, and managed to call her Magdalean Norman, with an ease that astonished himself.

The story she was reading told of a girl who had fallen among evil companions, and had been almost lost, but, through a heroic determination to lead a pure life, had saved herself from ruin, and finally married an honorable man, and lived all her future days in a quiet cottage, surrounded by the barriers of an honest devotion.

"I'll be such a girl!" exclaimed Magdalean, closing the book. "I will place a wide gap between my past and my future life. Thank God, I have not sinned too deeply for repentance."

Just as she uttered these words, the door of the room was pushed open and Bradley Turner entered. He took off his hat, and said, respectfully:

"Miss Magdalean, there is a poor old man down-stairs, whom I picked up in the streets, and I'd like to bring him up-stairs to my room. He is quiet and won't make any fuss, I think."

"Bradley, this is your house, and not mine, so you can, of course, bring those you like here. But, I hope this protégé of yours is a respectable person—one that neither of us should be ashamed to recognize as a friend."

Bradley Turner looked down into the upturned face of the girl, and, after a pause, said: "Magdalean, don't you know I've gotten a heap of respect for you? Don't you know I have treated you just like a sister since you left that old bogus father who was leading you to the bad? There, you needn't color up. I know you never were bad; but, then, you don't suppose you could have lived long with Silas Norman without getting soiled some, do you?"

"No; I am very much afraid my surroundings were none of the best; but, as you say, I have come out of the fire unscathed, and in all my future life I mean to remain so. But, who is this man, Bradley?"

"Well, to tell you candidly, Magdalean, I found him in Dryades street."

"In Dryades street?"

"Now, don't go starting in that way. The poor old fellow was not guilty of wrong. He is in search of a lost daughter, who, he fears, has gone to wreck in this big city."

Magdalean started, as if shocked by an electric flash. "Where is he from?" she asked.

"Tennessee," he said.

"Bradley! I have an idea!"

"Indeed?"

"Yes, indeed! Mark Blanchard took his wife from Tennessee. Don't you remember?"

"I think I do," was the slow response.

"Perhaps this man's daughter and the

girl, Tillie Maynard, are one and the same person? Don't you see?"

"Yes, I see," replied Bradley, stroking his chin meditatively; "but, seems to me that you jump at conclusions suddenly like that."

"What do you mean?"

"Well, I simply mean that many a man might have a daughter in Tennessee as well as my new friend, and many a man's daughter might wander down the Mississippi to New Orleans as well as my friend Blanchard's wife. Don't you think so, now?"

"Yes, she thought so, but the cool, doubtful manner of Bradley was very annoying to a young, impetuous girl, who had just satisfied herself that she had made an interesting discovery."

Seeing this, Turner said: "Now, perhaps you are right, after all; and if you are I'll bag my head, that's all."

Saying this, he started off and soon returned, leading in the old man.

Magdalen placed a large chair for him, close to the center-table, and dropped into a seat immediately opposite.

"You are hurt," she exclaimed, in alarm, noticing the blood upon his clothing.

"Yes, miss, but not bad," replied the old gentleman. "My heart is much sorer than my head."

"But, you must have your head dressed. Here, Bradley, do you get that towel on the rack there, and while I hold the basin, you can bathe the wound."

"But, I don't want to trouble you, miss," said the old man. "I'm not worth minding. Indeed, I'm not!"

Magdalen paid no heed to his remonstrance, but busied herself about the apartment, and ordered Bradley until the stranger's head was neatly bandaged and his clothing carefully brushed. When all this had been accomplished, she sat down again, and while her face beamed with expectation, she said:

"I'm going to ask you a very important question, and I am just dying to hear your answer."

The old man stared into the pretty face, and said: "Well, go on; I'll answer you any thing."

"What is your name?"

"She was leaning over the table now, eagerly awaiting his reply."

"Robert Maynard," was the reply.

"And your daughter's name was—"

"Tillie. Although we always called her Tillie."

Magdalen leaped to her feet and caught Bradley Turner by the collar of his coat.

"What did I tell you, eh? What a silly, shallow set you men are, after all! Now, Brad Turner, what have you to say for yourself?"

Poor Bradley looked very guilty, indeed, and answered, with a crestfallen air, really pitiable:

"Well, you see, Magdalen, I was never much on prophecy. But, I can tell you one thing: I am as glad that that old man has turned up as if I had just been handed the largest prize in Charley Howard's lottery. I am, upon my soul!"

"I know you are, you great big, good-hearted fellow! But then, you know, you ought to have more faith in women than you have."

This was said in a bantering, laughing way, and then she turned to Robert Maynard, who was regarding both her and Turner with a look of surprise.

"Now, don't you get excited," she began, "but I think I know where your daughter is!"

"Oh, my God!" he exclaimed, the tears welling up into his eyes; "at last! at last!"

"There, old man, now keep cool, will you?" said Turner. "No person can tell you any thing as long as you carry on in this style."

"But, I am nearly wild, sir, you can't understand my feelings, sir—indeed, indeed, you can't, sir. My poor wife is waiting my return, nearly as crazy as I am."

"Well, then, your daughter has been in New Orleans," said Magdalen, wiping the moisture from her eyes; "and she is now in Mexico."

"In Mexico!" he ejaculated; "in Mexico! My poor child in Mexico! Oh, surely you are teasing me, miss. You really don't mean that my poor Tillie is so far away?"

"Yes, she is," replied Magdalen; "at least, that's where they took her, months ago."

"Who took her?" His eyes were wide open now, and there was a fierce, hard look in them. "Who took my child away? Who dared to take her?"

"Is it possible that you have not suspected some person of taking her away?" questioned Turner. "You don't think the girl would leave her home and come away down here if there was not a man in the case?"

"A man? Do you mean to say that she was kidnapped—that she was forced away from her home?"

"No," replied Turner, "she wasn't, but she was coaxed away."

"Coaxed away?" repeated Maynard. Then he closed his eyes an instant and appeared lost in thought; and, finally, starting violently, exclaimed: "Do you mean a young man named Mark Blanchard, who visited our village a few months since?"

"I guess you are on the right track at last, my friend," replied Turner.

"And he it was who ruined her?"

"Yes, and no."

"What do you mean?"

"I mean," returned Turner, "that he ruined her by marrying her, but that she is not lost, as you suppose her, but simply a deceived wife."

The old man grasped Bradley by the hand, and, while his voice grew husky, and the tears streamed down his wrinkled face, said:

"Thank God, she is not a thing of shame. I can bear any thing now—any thing, but that. Oh, God, that's what was killing me and her poor, poor mother!"

He covered his face with his hands and wept; and so did Turner and Magdalen, too.

When he recovered from his first great joy, they told him every thing the reader already knows, of Mark Blanchard's plot to rid himself of his lawful wife, and to form an alliance with the rich Blanche Davenant.

As he listened, his eyes dilated with wonder, and his hands worked nervously as the story was finished. He would like to go at once and throttle the knave; he would like to expose him, and visit upon him the full weight of a father's vengeance before the coming sunrise; but, Magdalen stopped him, by saying:

"You must have more care, or you will ruin all our plans. Suppose you go to-night and publicly denounce this villain, what

will your laudable efforts amount to? Simply nothing! He will have you arrested for a lunatic; you will have no evidence to prove either your sanity or your charges, and a mad-house will not afford you a very excellent opportunity of finding your child."

"He admitted the force of his reasoning, and she went on to say that she would furnish him with the necessary funds to go to Mexico in search of his daughter, and that, in the mean time, she would have a close watch kept upon Mark Blanchard's movements, and prevent him, if possible, from committing bigamy."

"And if I find her, what then?"

"Then," answered Magdalen, a gleam of triumph in her beautiful face, "we will unmask this wretch, and show Miss Blanche Davenant the kind of clay of which her idol is made."

After talking the matter over and over, it was settled that Robert Maynard should start on his long journey early on the following day.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 61.)

The Winged Whale: OR, THE MYSTERY OF RED RUPERT.

BY ALBERT W. AIKEN,
AUTHOR OF "SCARLET HAND," "HEART OF FIRE,"
"WOLF DEMON," ETC.

CHAPTER XXII. THE CHASE.

ON the ocean, parting the dark billows with their white caps of foam, swiftly glided the fishing-boats. The breeze, freshening every moment, filled the little sails and urged on the light crafts with racer-like speed. True children of the sea, they danced merrily on the bosom of the heaving waters.

Many an anxious glance the fugitives cast behind them at their pursuers. But the distance between the boats lessened not. Many an anxious glance Andrews cast upward to the sky. Rupert noticed the glances.

"Why do you look at the sky so anxiously, Andrews?" he asked.

"Watching the clouds and wishing," Andrews replied, with another glance upward.

"Wishing for what?"

"For darkness. If one of those clouds scudding across the sky would only hide the light of the moon for twenty or thirty minutes, I could tack, evade those fellows and run back to the city, leaving them to go on a wild-goose chase oceanward."

"There seems to be but little chance of the moon being hid," Rupert said, after a long look at the sky.

"That's so!" cried Andrews, in a tone of disgust.

Let us hope that the clouds will gather."

"But they are all broken ones, confounded 'em!" growled Andrews, in a discontented tone. "There's a big one, though, over there," and the Yankee pointed to a huge black cloud that, like a great vulture, was hovering in the air over the sky of Pensacola.

"Yes; if the force of the wind does not split it up into fragments, it will veil the light of the moon most effectually."

"Just so! that's what I calculate on," Andrews said, quietly. "Once let the darkness hide us and I'll jest up helm and slip under their lee."

"But, if the darkness does come, may they not suspect that we will endeavor to elude them by such a trick?" Isabel asked.

"It won't make much difference, Miss, whether they suspect it or not. There's too much sea-room here for us to run afoul of them, unless luck is awfully on their side," Andrews replied.

Then the Yankee turned his head to gaze again at the boat of the pursuers.

Isabel was seated by Rupert's side, her head resting on his shoulder and her waist encircled by his arm. On her face was written calm contentment; no thoughts of danger there. The blue eyes that looked into the face of the sailor were full of trust and love.

"Are you not cold, Isabel?" asked Rupert, anxiously, as he looked into the sweet face of the girl.

"No," she replied, with a loving smile upon her face.

"Yet the night air is chill. I can feel it, and I am a sailor used to storm and hardship."

"Am I not by your side?" a bright look of love in her pure blue eyes as she put the question.

"And does that keep you warm?" he asked, laughing.

"Yes. The answer was but a single word—a simple 'yes,' yet it spoke volumes to the heart of Rupert."

"Oh, Isabel, you are a treasure!" he murmured, earnestly, as he pressed the beautiful girl closer to him.

"I hope that you will find me so, in the future," she said, with quite a sober look upon her face.

"I have no doubts, Isabel, except, perhaps, that I am not worthy to win the love of such an angel as you are."

"No angel, Rupert; only a woman, with all a woman's faults, and, I hope, with all a woman's virtues."

"I do not doubt that," the sailor replied, quickly. "Are you not flying with me from home and friends? Linking your fortunes with those of a man of whom you know almost nothing? How know you what I have been since we parted, years ago? I may be an outcast from my fellow-men. How dare you trust your young heart in my keeping?"

"I look in your eyes and I read there, honesty and truth. You can not make me doubt you, say what you will. I do not think that the boy who fearlessly risked his life to save the little girl that he loved from the panther's jaws, grown to manhood, would so wrong the woman that he loved, as to ask her to share his life if he was not worthy of the heartfelt passion that she is so willing to give him."

With every word that fell from her lips, Rupert felt that he loved her more and more.

"I can not make you doubt me then, or shake your love?" he said.

"Rupert, you are the only being on earth that I love. I have no relative living in the world. You must be to me, husband, father, brother, all. In yonder city there is no one that I care for, excepting the commandante, Don Alvarado, my guardian. I have waited long and anxiously for you to come for me, for a secret hope in my heart whispered that you would come, some day."

I knew you the moment I set eyes upon your face, although you have changed greatly. Rupert, my love—my husband; the promise that the lips of the girl gave, the heart of the woman is ready to fulfill."

"Isabel, whatever I have been in the past, the future I will try to be worthy of your love; no act of mine shall bring a blush to your fair brow," the sailor said, earnestly.

"I do not fear," smilingly replied the girl.

"You prove that by your confidence. You have not even asked whether we are going."

"I am going with you, and that contents me."

"But, Isabel, I can not take you from your home at present. When we join our fates together we must leave Pensacola forever. That at present I can not do. I received communication this afternoon from New Orleans in regard to a certain piece of business. That business will detain me in Pensacola perhaps a week more, and it may be longer. I have thought of a plan by means of which I think we can outwit the malice of yonder Spaniard. It will seem to him as if we are in league with the powers of darkness below."

"Act as you please," said Isabel, softly.

"I will obey without a murmur; without even a question."

The conversation between the lovers had been carried on in low tones, and Andrews at the helm, had discreetly kept his eyes elsewhere, and had not disturbed the two with his gaze.

"We shall have to make for the cove after all," said Rupert, aloud, with an earnest glance at the dark cloud that was slowly advancing seaward.

"Yes, sir; no chance of giving them the slip at present. Whoever is handling yonder boat knows the sea like a book. I didn't believe that any of the Spaniard's cutthroats knew enough to handle a sea-craft," Andrews said, slowly. He had a supreme contempt for the "Dons," as he termed the Spaniards.

We will now turn our attention to the pursuing boat which contained Estevan and his assassin band.

As they sped on, cleaving through the billows, and the good boat walking the waters like a thing of life, Estevan kept his eyes intently fixed upon the white sail of the fugitives, that spread like the wing of some huge sea-bird over the crested billows.

Long and intently he watched, and then, at last, a bitter oath broke from his lips.

"Curses on the luck! we are not gaining an inch!" he cried.

"No, señor; the other boat is as fast a sailer as our own," calmly replied Baptiste, whose hand on the tiller shaped the course of the boat. "Besides, we are carrying a heavier load. There is but three on board of her, six with us."

Roque said: "once outside the bay on the ocean, he'll give us the slip."

"No fear of that; he's not fool enough to risk that egg-shell of a craft on the rough billows outside. She'd not live ten minutes in the heavy sea!" Baptiste exclaimed.

Still onward they glided. Santa Rosa Island rose black upon their left. Estevan and Baptiste cast many an anxious glance at the sky. They feared that the heavy cloud that was advancing so rapidly, borne from the land on the bosom of the swift wind, would cover the clear, round moon, and thus aid the escape of their prey.

They had grounds for apprehension, for the cloud was dark and heavy; it was advancing, too, with great speed.

Then, as they looked upon the white sail of the fishing-boat in whose wake they followed so closely, they saw that she still held her course right onward, as if intent upon finding safety upon the broad waters of the mighty ocean.

If that cursed cloud covers the face of the moon, the game is up!" Estevan cried, angrily.

"You are right, señor captain," Baptiste replied. "In the darkness they can tack, but back to Pensacola, and escape us."

Estevan did not derive much consolation from the words of the pilot.

"Is there no way by which we can increase our speed?" the Spaniard asked.

"I can only think of one."

"Throw two or three of these gentlemen overboard," Baptiste replied, with grim humor.

"Oh, we should drown!" cried Roque, in horror. "I never could bear water in any shape!"

"Hullo! he seems to be changing his course!" exclaimed Estevan.

Baptiste watched the light craft, before him for a moment in silence.

You are right, señor; he is hugging the shore margin closely."

"What can be his motive?"

"Satan only knows! It can not be to give him more sea-room. If he intended to take advantage of the coming darkness and slip by us, his wisest course would have been to run more to the island. I can not guess his idea."

Then, even while their eyes were fixed intently upon the boat, it suddenly disappeared.

A cry of astonishment, not unmixed with horror, went up from the Spaniards.

"It's come to the devil!" muttered Roque, who looked upon all Americans as being hand-in-glove with Satan.

"By Heaven! this is wonderful!" exclaimed Estevan.

As for Baptiste, he said nothing, but shaped the course of the boat more in to the shore.

"What are you going to do?" asked Estevan, who noticed his motion.

"Find out where your boat has gone to. I'm no believer in miracles."

You have a suspicion then? What is it?"

"Wait, and your answer will come from the shore yonder," Baptiste replied.

On glided the boat, all on board waiting with anxiety. Ten minutes, and rounding a little point of land—a sort of natural headland that projected into the waters of the bay—they saw the narrow entrance to the bayou. 'Twas the same wherein the fishermen had ventured in their craft, in the opening chapter of our story.

A cry of astonishment went up on the air. The Spaniards now understood the strange disappearance of the fugitives. But, even as they rounded the point and glided into the still waters of the bayou, that were protected by the headland from the disturbing influence of the wind, the dark cloud, that both pursued and pursued had watched with such eager eyes, passed slowly over the bright face of the silver moon. An inky darkness fell on sea and land. The gloom

of the bayou shut the boat of the fugitives from the eyes of the hunters.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE DEMON OF THE BAYOU.

"SATAN himself aids this accursed American!" cried Estevan, in anger.

"Shall we go on?" asked Baptiste.

"Yes, I'll not give up the chase yet!" cried Estevan, quickly.

"We'll have to get out the oars, then, for the breeze has died away; or, rather, this headland keeps it from us. The sail no longer feels its influence."

The words of Baptiste were true; the canvas flapped idly against the mast.

Even with the sweeps then, I'll follow them into the jaws of the world below!" The tone of the Spanish captain told full well that he would keep his angry determination.

The long blades of the oars dipped into the ink-like water; slowly the boat glided onward.

"Comrade," said Roque to the soldier next to him, as he tugged at the oar. "I'd give a few pieces of gold to be well out of this. The captain talks about the jaws of the world below; it seems to me that we are in the mouth of Hades already."

The bad influence of the darkness of the bayou was beginning to have its effect upon the superstitious minds of the Spaniards. Warily they looked around them, expecting each instant to see demon faces glaring in the gloom.

Estevan, his eyes fixed upon the darkness before him, was vainly striving to catch a glimpse of the white sail that had so suddenly disappeared from his view.

"If the breeze befriends us not, neither does it serve this cursed American. If we are compelled to trust to our oars to give us motion, he also must have been obliged to use the same means; yet I can not hear a single sound re-echoing across the water," he said, his puzzled look betraying his astonishment.

"It is strange," replied Baptiste, to whom the same thought had occurred, and who had been listening, expecting each moment to hear the dip of oars, or the grating sound as they struck against the wood of the oarlocks.

But all was still. Silence reigned supreme over the dark waters of the bayou.

"Oh! they've gone down below or up into the air," muttered Roque; "Satan always aids his children, and this American is a born devil."

A dozen boat-lengths forward had the Spaniards advanced, when a cry of astonishment broke from the lips of one of the soldiers in the bow of the fishing-boat. Estevan and Baptiste re-echoed the cry. The two soldiers tugging at the oars stopped in their toil and turned their heads in wonder.

After off on the surface of the dark waters of the bayou shone a circle of light.

The eyes of the Spaniards opened wide with horror as they gazed upon the strange sight.

"Holy Virgin save us! what is that?" cried Roque, in terror.

"It is Satan himself! We are lost!" exclaimed one of the soldiers, sinking upon his knees, in prayer.

"Bend to your oars again, men!" cried Estevan, in desperation. "By Heaven! I swear I'll not turn back until I know the meaning of this strange sight!"

A cry of mingled horror and expostulation went up from the soldiers at this determination.

"Oh, señor captain, this is madness!" cried Roque. "It is tempting Heaven to put ourselves in the power of the spirits of darkness that haunt this dreadful place. Rather let us bend to our oars and fly with all possible speed."

"Yes, yes!" exclaimed the soldiers, in assent to the words of their comrade.

"I fear not the spirits of this place, although they be devils fresh from the flames below!" exclaimed Estevan, fiercely. "Again I say, bend to your oars and we'll soon know why yonder light floats on the surface of the water."

"But it is a spirit light, señor captain," pleaded Roque, acting as spokesman for the rest.

It may be produced by natural causes. Let us advance and we will discover the truth."

"But," señor captain, "it is certain death to brave the power of the spirits of the other world!" exclaimed Roque. "See, yonder mystic light is steadily advancing toward us; it is a warning for us to retire. The spirits are angry because we have entered upon their domain. Listen to reason, Señor Estevan, and let us fly from this accursed spot at once. If we linger here, our lives will pay the forfeit for our rashness."

"Cowards!" cried Estevan, in a rage, "do you value life so highly?"

"The Virgin, señor, a man has but one life," muttered Roque, sullenly; "if a man had nine lives, like a cat, he could afford to throw one away; but, as it is, he can't!"

"You will not obey my orders, then?" demanded Estevan, in wrath.

"Why should a man go to certain death?" exclaimed Roque, sullenly, and with a defiant air.

"Yes; why?" muttered the soldiers, in a chorus.

Estevan drew a pistol from his belt, cocked it quickly, and leveled it full at the head of Roque.

"Dog!" he cried, in anger, "take up your oar or I'll give you the death that you are so fearful of, at once. Bend to your sweep, or you die upon the instant!"

In the gleaming eye of the Spanish captain the soldier saw written fierce determination. He felt assured that his officer would keep his word.

"Well," he said, sullenly, and after pausing for a moment, "I'll obey orders; our deaths will be at your door. Let me turn round, though; I don't want to back into certain death."

"As you please," Estevan replied.

The two at the oars changed their places, so that they faced the circle of light. The long sweeps again descended into the water, and once more the light boat glided onward; but slowly though, for the heart of the rowers was not in their toil.

Estevan once more turned his attention to the mysterious light that floated upon the surface of the dark waters of the bayou.

Suddenly a cry of surprise burst from the lips of the Spanish captain. The cry was taken up by the lips of each soul within the boat.

In the center of the circle of light that rested upon the water, a dark and terrible form was rising. To the fear-starting eyes of the Spaniards it seemed to rise from the dark depths of the bayou. Slowly, little by little, it appeared.

All within the little craft gazed, spell-bound with terror, upon the awful form. Never before had their eyes looked upon any thing that bore a semblance to the frightful figure that now appeared in the center of the circle of light.

The rowers ceased their work; the oars remained suspended over the water; the boat lost its headway and lay like a log upon the surface of the inky tide.

Larger and larger grew the demon form. It assumed the shape of a huge fish with great, dark wings projecting from its shoulders. Its huge eyes, starting from its head, were red and gleamed like balls of fire.

Terror-stricken, the Spaniards gazed upon the awful figure. Forgetting now was all thoughts of flight. Fear held them within its iron bond, and paralyzed both mind and body. With eyes of awe they looked; they felt that the hour of doom was near.

And, as the helpless men, benumbed by the chill fingers of fear, looked upon the demon form, its huge mouth opened, and forth came a fearful blast of flame and smoke. The sulphurous fumes floated on the air; the flame leaped upward to the sky; and then, as if by magic, on the instant the demon form, the mystic light, all vanished, and darkness again reigned supreme within the bayou.

Like men awakened from a fearful dream, the soldiers tugged at their oars with arms possessed of giant power. The thin blades quivered as they beat the water with their powerful stroke, and bent like whalebone as they pushed back the waves. Cold drops of perspiration poured from the bronzed foreheads of the rowers. No word was spoken till the light boat, freed from the dark embrace of the bayou, floated on the white-capped waters of the bay, and the sail once more felt the free kiss

"Good-morning, senior captain!" cried the lieutenant, gayly. "Are you listening to the birds singing in the bushes? They sing of peace and love, but I must talk of a different subject—war and hate."

Estevan did not guess the meaning of the words of the other, and with a questioning look gazed into his face.

"The American, senior Rupert," explained Cadova.

"Well, what of him?"

"I happened to walk past his house this morning. He was sitting on the veranda, smoking."

Estevan, starting in amazement, interrupted the speech of the lieutenant.

"Why do you start, captain?" Cadova asked, in astonishment.

"You saw the American this morning?"

Estevan questioned.

"Yes, early, just after sunrise. To tell the truth, captain, I was up late last night with a party of gallants, and I drank more wine than was good for me. The consequence was a terrible headache this morning. In order to drive it off, I rose early and took a stroll down by the beach. I thought the fresh breeze from the sea would do me good. I saw the American last night about twelve, but my brains were steeped in wine and I was in no mood to talk business; but this morning I improved the opportunity."

"You saw the American last night about twelve?" Estevan demanded, utterly bewildered.

"Yes," replied Cadova, who could not understand why his words should agitate his officer so strangely.

"I can not understand this," Estevan murmured, half aloud and half to himself; "yet if she returned, why not he, also?"

"What is it that perplexes you, captain?" the lieutenant asked, unable to guess a reason for Estevan's agitation.

"A thought only; but, go on," Estevan replied, evading the question.

"Well, as I said, I saw the American sitting on the veranda; so I thought it would be a capital opportunity to arrange that little affair that you intrusted to my charge. I accosted the American and we settled every thing within ten minutes. I found him very much of a gentleman, as is also his second, senior Andrews."

"The details of the affair are arranged then?"

"Yes; you are to meet on Monday, at four in the afternoon. By that time the dense heat of the sun will have abated. The place, that little glade by the beach, some three miles north, that is called the Indian Camp. Two or three little affairs have already taken place there. It is the most suitable spot that I know of."

"And the weapons?"

"Swords, as you wished."

"That is perfectly satisfactory."

"Yes, I thought it would be. Captain, if I might recommend, I'd take a few bouts with the rapier, just to put the muscles of your wrist in play. This American has the sinews of a giant; he had his coat off and his arm bared; a more perfect development of the muscles I never looked upon. I fancy, too, from a certain carriage of the head, that he has smelt powder, and knows something of a soldier's life."

"He is a sailor, I believe," Estevan said; "there seems to be some mystery about him."

"A sailor?" exclaimed the lieutenant, thoughtfully. "I'll lay ten to one, that he is a buccaner, then; one of Lafitte's gang, the pirates of the gulf, as they are called. He looks like a hardy dare-devil. Take my advice, captain; get in practice, for, upon my word, you'll find that this duel will be no child's play."

"I will follow your counsel. If you are going to the fort, tell the drill-sergeant to come to my quarters after inspection."

"Certainly; any further orders, captain?"

"No; that will do for the present."

The lieutenant withdrew and left Estevan again to his gloomy meditations.

"It would be strange if fate should will that I should fall by the hand of this American. I have but little fear, though. In old Spain I bore the reputation of being the best swordsman in the Spanish army. It would be odd if my skill should desert me now!" For a moment Estevan was silent. His thoughts went back to the mysterious occurrences of the previous night. "In vain I seek a clue to unravel the tangled skein!" he murmured.

Then, as he glanced carelessly through the window, he saw the graceful form of Isabel moving amid the shrubbery of the garden.

"There she is now!" he exclaimed, a sudden thought occurring to him. "I'll seek and question her. Perhaps from her lips I may learn something that may dispel this cloud of mystery that hangs over the events of last night. I will try, whether I succeed or fail."

Armed with this resolution, Estevan donned his hat and proceeded at once to the garden. He saw the flutter of Isabel's white dress amid the green foliage. In the midst of blossoms she stood, the fairest flower of all.

Isabel turned as she heard the footsteps of the young soldier approaching her.

"Good-morning, Isabel," the captain said, doffing his hat politely, as he approached.

"Good-morning," she replied, and as she spoke, Estevan could not perceive a trace of embarrassment in her manner.

"You are out early."

"Yes; the perfume of the flowers is sweetest at morn," she replied, carelessly plucking a rose that grew by her side.

"You do not seem at all fatigued this morning," Estevan said, with a glance full of meaning.

Isabel opened her blue eyes widely and gazed with a look of astonishment upon the captain.

"Fatigued?" she exclaimed, an accent of wonder in her voice; "why should I be fatigued?"

"The sail you took last night down the bay," the Spaniard said.

"The sail I took?" exclaimed Isabel, in wonder.

"Yes; which, had it been witnessed by other eyes than mine and my men, who will hold their peace at my bidding, would have sullied the fair reputation of Isabel Morena."

A half-frown was upon the brow of the Spaniard as he spoke.

"Sully my reputation," said Isabel, quickly, a burning blush sweeping over her face.

"You speak in riddles, senior; I can not understand you."

"Why do you try to deceive me?" demanded Estevan, scornfully. "The effort is useless. Suppose I was to tell the good people of Pensacola that Isabel Morena spent the better part of last evening in a boat on the waters of the bay in company

with two strangers, what do you think they would say?"

"They would not believe you," replied Isabel, quietly.

"But they would believe the evidence of some five or six men who also saw you, and with myself, pursued you until you sought refuge in Bayou Achee, and in the darkness eluded me," cried Estevan, in heat.

"If report speak true, there are some of the soldiers of the garrison whom the people of Pensacola would not believe under oath. I hope that these witnesses of yours are not gentlemen of a like description," Isabel said, with latent sarcasm in her tones.

"Do you wish me to give the story to the world and prove whether it will be believed or not?" asked Estevan, menace in his voice.

"Act at your own pleasure," replied Isabel, calmly.

"You do not fear then?"

"Fear?" and Isabel drew up her slight form and gazed with flashing eyes upon the Spaniard. "No, I do not fear aught that your malice may prompt you to do."

"Isabel, I would be friends with you; do not look upon me in the light of an enemy," Estevan said, softly.

"What is the use of your denying the truth? By some strange chance, you escaped from me last night. The mystery that surrounds your escape I can not solve. But you know as well as I, that you met this American on the beach last night, then took refuge on board a fishing-boat and put to sea. Do you deny this?"

"And this is your story; suppose I bring forward a friend who will declare that I spent the hours from eight to eleven last evening at her house?"

Estevan was utterly bewildered. For a moment he could not reply. Then he recovered from his stupor and found the use of his tongue.

"Do you deny that you were on the beach last night?" he cried.

"Prove it if you can!" Isabel exclaimed, defiantly.

Estevan rapidly thought over the situation in his mind. The night was dark, although the moon had shone brightly. Neither he nor his men had approached within a hundred paces of the two who had met on the beach. Although he felt certain in his own mind that it was Isabel and the American whom he had surprised and forced to put to sea in the fishing-boat, yet he saw how difficult it would be to prove it, particularly if some devoted female friend of Isabel was willing to screen her.

Estevan bit his lips; he felt that he was beaten, and the thought galled him.

"Isabel, I will spare you; but I tell you, frankly, that so sure as there is a heaven above, so sure will you be mine in the end. Struggle as you will to escape me, all your efforts will be fruitless. Your love is doomed, no power on this earth can save him. When he is gone, then, perhaps, you will listen to reason."

Estevan turned upon his heel and walked away.

Isabel looked after him, scorn flashing in her full blue eyes.

"He threatens bravely," she murmured; "but let him look to himself. Rupert's arm is strong; I do not fear but that he will guard the life that is so dear to me."

Leaving Isabel to dream bright day-dreams of the man she loved so well, and the Spanish captain to muse over his dark plots to remove a hated rival from his path, we will follow the lieutenant, who acted as second to Estevan.

As Cadova entered upon the street, he met the commandante, Don Carlos.

"Good-morning, senior commandante," said the lieutenant, saluting.

The commandante returned the salute. A sudden thought passed across his mind. He knew the flitting reputation of Cadova, well, and seeing him come from his son's quarters, the old man guessed his errand there.

"When does the meeting between my son and this American take place?" he asked.

The lieutenant fell into the trap, and, thinking that the father knew all the particulars, he replied without hesitation, and told all concerning the arrangements for the duel.

The commandante listened attentively, and when the lieutenant had finished, dismissed him with a sad smile.

Cadova little guessed the error he had made.

"Rash and hot-headed," he's all the mother," the commandante exclaimed. "He flies to his death when he seeks to encounter the sword of the American. This is the justice of Heaven. My act killed the mother of this Rupert, and now, in return, he will kill my son. They must not meet. I can and will prevent it."

(To be continued—Commenced in No. 57.)

Won by the Waves.

BY MATTIE DYER BRITTS.

EVERYBODY goes to the sea-shore in the summer season. Miss Debby Reeves, therefore, being a most respectable somebody, living in a tidy house of her own in a respectable New York street, bundled up herself and her pretty niece, Annie, and arrived at Atlantic City just as the tide of fashions and flirtations rose into full sway, and the demand for habitable apartments was running the hotel-keepers nearly crazy.

Miss Debby, however, having had the forethought to send down and engage rooms a month beforehand, was disturbed by none of these vexations. Therefore, Miss Debby, her boxes, budgets, bundles, and her blossom-eyed niece, being landed at the door of the Mansion House, there remained only for her to take possession of her quarters and select a seat at the table with an Episcopal clergyman's family, which, of course, was very genteel.

Miss Debby was a maiden lady, of somewhat uncertain age, and Quaker extraction. Though possessed of some quips and cranks of her own, she had a sensible head and a good heart, and—considerable money in her pocket. And last, but by no means least, she had, as already hinted, a niece—the brightest, sweetest, sunniest little dimpled body in the world! And fitted to make the lucky fellow who happened to be the man of her choice as happy as mortals ever dare to be.

There was a promising young attorney in a New York office who answered to the name of Morton James, who would even have said more than this for pretty Annie Reeves. So you may be prepared to hear that, after Annie and her aunt left the city, Morton James suddenly discovered that his health was rapidly failing. Needed change and sea-air, in fact; so he forthwith packed

up his traps, forsook the dingy law-office, and, to Annie's delight and Miss Debby's consternation, presented himself at the table of the Mansion House, and announced to them that, by dint of great exertions, he had procured a room on the very same floor with them.

Now, Miss Debby looked on Mr. James with no favorable eye; not because there was anything against him, but because he was of the masculine persuasion, and her abhorrence extended to the whole race of mankind. Her mind was made up that Annie should never fall into the dragon-clutches of any of them. And in view of the facts that she had cared for and protected Annie since the girl was a year-old orphan baby, and intended to make her heiress of her own snug fortune, Miss Debby considered that she had a right to some say-so in her disposal.

However, you know, "man" (or woman either) proposes—"and somebody else often disposes." Annie Reeves was not disposed to be an old maid. In fact, since Mr. Morton James came upon the scene, she showed a decided inclination to take the reins into her own hands, and drive whithersoever she listed.

Good Miss Debby's soul was vexed within her, but she bore up with exemplary patience, until Annie capped the climax by going with Morton James to the lighthouse, and spending a solitary hour romantically leaning over the gallery with him, watching the moon rise over the sea.

Next morning Annie was summoned to judgment in Miss Debby's own room. Miss Debby sat embroidering a dog upon a square of canvas, destined to cover a foot-stool for the repose of her maiden feet, and certainly possessing the merit of originality, inasmuch as no dog, living or dead, ever could have borne the slightest resemblance to it. This special piece of work Miss Debby was wont to produce when she designed to be peculiarly impressive; so Annie, as soon as she saw it, nerved herself for the lecture she knew was sure to come.

But Miss Debby expended her eloquence all in vain. Annie would not "listen to reason," and promise to turn the cold shoulder on Morton James.

"What shall I do?" cried Miss Debby, in despair. "I tell you, Annie, it is an awful thing to be married!"

"How do you know, aunt?" You never tried it!" said saucy Annie.

"No, I was too wise to try it," returned Miss Debby, with great dignity. "I tell you, child, she repeated, with a solemn shake of the head, 'it's an awful thing to be married!'"

"But it's a great deal fuller not to be!" retorted Annie.

Miss Debby's hands flew up in horror. "Grossness, goodness, child! haven't you a bit of delicacy left? If this is what Morton James brings you to, I shall do well to separate you, indeed!"

"Aunt, are you through your lecture? Because it is nearly ten o'clock," said Annie, quietly, by way of answer.

"Well, what if it is nearly ten o'clock? What is to happen at ten o'clock?"

"Nothing, only I am going to walk on the beach."

Indeed! And do you propose to go alone, Miss Debby?"

"No, aunt. Mr. James is going with me," said Annie, demurely.

Miss Debby rose from her chair. "Mr. James! Now, look you, Miss Annie Reeves! If one plan won't work, another will! I don't intend Mr. James shall go with you to the beach to-day. In fact, I mean to go there myself, and to secure your obedience until I return, I shall just take the liberty of locking you in and keeping Mr. James out!"

And before Annie fairly comprehended what she meant, Miss Debby snatched her hat from the bed, walked out of the room, locked the door, and dropped the key in her pocket! Annie sprang up in angry indignation, and tried the door, but it was actually locked, fast and tight—she was a prisoner. So, dropping into the nearest chair, she burst into a passion of angry tears.

Presently a firm, ringing step came up the hall, and there was a low tap on Annie's door.

She rose, went close to the door, and said, softly: "Morton?"

"Yes. It is time for our walk," answered he, from outside.

"Oh, Morton, I can't go! Aunt Debby has gone away and locked the door—gone to beach-walking by herself, and oh, Morton! she locked me in!"

"Locked you in! What for, in the name of goodness?"

"To keep me away from you, Morton! You know I told you how queer she was."

"Yes, but here, Annie dear, this is a little too much! I won't stand it! There's a transom over this door; can't you climb up to it by a chair, and get through? I'll help you down."

"Oh, Morton, no! Suppose some one were to come through the hall!"

"Well, I suppose it wouldn't do! Nor it wouldn't be the thing for me to burst the door down, either, and rouse the house. Annie, where did your aunt go?"

"She said she was going to walk on the beach."

"Well, so am I, Annie; go and 'beard the lion in her den,' and see if I can't talk her over."

"Oh, Morton, you never, never can!"

"It's worth trying, at all events. Good-by, Annie; somebody is coming up-stairs."

And Mr. James hastened away, before any one could appear and get an idea that something was wrong.

By the time Miss Debby arrived at the pleasant beach, the cool air had somewhat soothed her ruffled spirits. It was in a comfortable frame of mind that she settled herself in a rocky nook, with a book which she had brought for an hour's quiet reading. Had she known that, at the very moment she took her seat, the first wave of the returning tide crept slowly up the sands, she would have sought a safer position. But she did not know it; the book was very interesting, and the first intimation she got that old Neptune was warning her not to trespass on his dominions, was the wash of a wave over her feet!

She sprang up to retreat, but, to her dismay, the sands between her and the shingly beach were covered with water! Now poor Miss Debby was desperately afraid of water, and she imagined the waves on the sands to be much deeper than they were. Half dead with fright, she gathered up her skirts, upon which the water was momentarily encroaching, and shrieked aloud for help. But not even a solitary fisherman was in sight.

She would have tried to climb the rocks, but their smooth sides offered no foothold. And the waves were rising rapidly higher—

she would surely be washed off the rocks and drowned! Would Annie grieve, she wondered? Poor Annie, if she were only here now! If somebody would only come! Again Miss Debby lifted up her voice and screamed loudly for help. And this time aid was near, for a man came hurrying round the rocks, and as he drew near, Miss Debby saw it was Morton James.

"Oh, Mr. James!" she shrieked, forgetting her animosity in her affright, "the tide has caught me and I shall be drowned! Save me!"

A bright idea struck Mr. James—the spinner's extremity might be his opportunity—instead of hastening to her rescue, he paused, saying, coolly:

"Indeed, Miss Reeves, you are in a bad box! I would help you gladly if all this water were not between us."

"Oh! come through it! Come through it! You're a man, and can swim! Oh! don't let me drown, Mr. James! Oh, help me! help me!"

"Impossible, Miss Debby. Don't you see how the water is rising?"

"Oh, yes, I see! I see! My stockings are all wet! Oh, goodness gracious, I've said stockings to a man! Oh, the water'll be up to my knees next! There, my gracious goodness, I've made it worse! I don't care, either! Oh, Mr. James, for the Lord's sake, help me!"

"I don't see how I can," said the scamp, coolly, "but I'll go back to the hotel and send somebody."

"Oh, no! no, no!" screamed poor Debby. "I shall be drowned like a rat in a tub long before you get there! Oh, come back, Mr. James! Dear Mr. James, don't leave me!"

But Morton James kept walking slowly away.

"Oh, come back! Come back!" yelled Miss Debby. "I'll give you any thing I've got in the world if you'll save me!"

"Will you give me Annie?" asked the hypocrite, turning back.

"No!" stoutly replied the spinner.

"Good-by, then. If you drown, I can have her, anyhow. Good-by."

Just then a great wave nearly threw Miss Debby off her balance.

"Yes! yes!" she shrieked. "Come and save me and you may have Annie!"

"Honor bright, Miss Debby?" cried Morton, bounding through the waves to her side.

"Yes! yes! Quick, quick! I'm most gone!" And as Morton caught her up in his arms and dashed back through the water, Miss Debby gave a great sigh and quietly fainted away!

Annie had dried her tears and sat by her window when she saw a carriage drive up, and to her infinite amazement, Morton James sprang out and assisted her aunt Debby to alight! She would have fawned down-stairs, but, alas, the door was locked.

In a moment more, however, it was unlocked, and Miss Debby and Morton James, both dripping wet to the waist, entered the room.

And before Annie could open her lips to ask what it all meant, Morton caught her in his arms, right in aunt Debby's presence, and nearly smothered her with kisses, saying, as well as he could, between them:

"There, Annie dear, it's all right, and our good aunt Debby has given you entirely to me forever."

"Oh, auntie, is it true?" cried Annie, trying to release herself.

"Yes, yes, I s'pose it is," grumbled aunt Debby. "The fellow has made a fool of me, but it's too late now, so I guess he may as well make one of you, too! There, go along, you pair of geese! I want to get some dry clothes on!"

Minnette.

BY MARO O. ROLFE.

"PLEASE, sir, give me a penny! Only a penny!"

The little supplicant looked up into Ralph Ormsby's kind, thoughtful face with a world of tender pleading in her soft brown eyes.

"Only a penny!" the gentle, childish voice said, and the words went straight to the listener's heart.

She was a pretty, dainty-faced little thing, with heavy masses of wavy golden hair falling in beautiful confusion around her sweet face, with its great brown eyes and rare, ripe, pouting lips, parted pleadingly from the pearly teeth, as she held forth her soft little hand for the money.

"Whose little girl are you, my dear?" he asked, kindly, as he deposited a silver-piece in the outstretched hand. "And what is your good aunt Debby has given you entirely to me forever."

"Oh, auntie, is it true?" cried Annie, trying to release herself.

"Yes, yes, I s'pose it is," grumbled aunt Debby. "The fellow has made a fool of me, but it's too late now, so I guess he may as well make one of you, too! There, go along, you pair of geese! I want to get some dry clothes on!"

"Minnette," said the soft young voice, as the child dropped the coin into a pocket of her tattered dress.

"And who is Rubaldo?"

"He's my pa; and we live away over there in the very top of one of those tall, tumble-down old houses on Griffin street. Oh, you can't think how very far up 'tis!"

"How old are you, Minnette?"

"Oh, I'm five, or seven, or twenty!" she said, honestly. "I can't count numbers. But Rubaldo taught me to count money."

"You've made a mistake, and given me four shillings. I did think I wouldn't tell you— but you're so kind and good! Rubaldo never speaks to me as you have to-day. He beats me sometimes, when I don't get enough money. I wish I had some other little girl's father, and some other little girl had Rubaldo!"

"Keep the money, Minnette; it's all yours."

Ralph Ormsby's mind went back, as it had done many times before, to the days when he had hoped that his own little darling might be a comfort and a solace to him, and the light and joy of his palatial home. He thought that, if God had spared her to him, she might look like Minnette.

"Why are you so solemn?" prattled the child. "I hope you ain't sorry you gave me the half dollar."

"I was thinking of my little girl," said he, slowly, not heeding her question.

"Have you got a little girl?" said the child, eagerly. "And is her name Nina?"

I saw a lady once whose name was Nina— and I ever have a little girl, I'll call her Nina!"

"I had a little girl once," continued Ralph Ormsby, "and her name was Effie."

"Effie?" repeated Minnette, with slow iteration. "A very pretty name, but I like Nina better. Where is she now?"

"She was burned to death—lost in the great fire three years ago!" answered Ormsby, sadly, while a pained look settled on his face.

"Lost in the fire," said Minnette, again repeating his words. "Why, Rubaldo found me in the fire!"

"In the fire! What do you mean, Minnette?"

"Yes," said the child, earnestly. "One day I asked him where he got me, and he said, 'Out of the fire, you little Salamander!' but I didn't believe him."

"Where is Rubaldo? Can you take me to him?" asked Ralph Ormsby, eagerly; for a strange, wild hope thrilled him—a hope that his child still lived.

"Yes," said Minnette, "if you will go to such a place; he's home and very sick. He thinks he's a-going to die, and talks about confessing. Mrs. O'Hadden says people always confess their sins before they die."

"And who is Mrs. O'Hadden?" queried Ormsby, as with Minnette's little hand clasped closely in his own, they went away in the direction of Griffin street, with its long rows of rickety tenement-houses.

"Oh, she's Irish, and ever so kind," exclaimed Minnette. "She helps to take care of Rubaldo. I'm going to live with her after he's gone."

It was a bleak evening in December, and wild and fearful night it bled far to be. The tall street lamps were already lighted, shaking and rattling in the chill north wind, and straggling, feathery flakes, flying hither and thither, told of an approaching snow storm. They walked rapidly on, and soon entered Griffin street. After ascending four creaking flights of stairs, they passed

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THE DETECTIVE'S WARD

is full of the most enticing interest of story, in which a beautiful child is the unconscious heroine of a strange series of singular and romantic events, and in which some of the most remarkable men and women of the representative classes are participants. It is, as a story, even more powerful and peculiar than "ORANGE NELL," and will serve still further to fasten attention upon its author as one of the most attractive writers now writing for any paper in America.

Foolscap Papers.

To the North Pole.

HAVING been appointed by the Government to act as President of the Commission to visit the North Pole and inspect its resources, preparatory to its purchase by the United States, I proceeded forthwith to construct a vessel of India rubber, for I had read of so many vessels being mashed to pieces between floating icebergs, and my philosophy convinced me that a ship so constructed, although it was mashed flat by icebergs, would sustain no injury, but resume its original shape again. Congress, in acknowledgment of the invention, presented me with a gold medal and resolution of thanks. Some people tried to discourage us, but we vowed that we would reach the North Pole or return in the attempt.

We set out from New York early in the spring, without any delay save a little time lost in getting a new man in our vice-president's place—he having accepted an offer to 'tend bar in the city; preferring to remain in a climate that had less cold in it, and a little more of something warm. The sheriff thoughtlessly held on to the cable a little while. It was very delightful to see how we "bounded over the billows." We steered directly for the North Star, and, by the way in which our vessel jumped, we thought we would soon reach it.

When off the coast of Greenland we got squeezed between two mountains of ice. The vessel came off all right, but three men had to be peeled off the sides of it.

The heat went down to 240 degrees below zero, but, as I had spent two winters in Vermont, I was not much affected by it. It was so cold that many of our men's tongues stuck to their teeth whenever they touched them, and I was in the habit of getting up in the morning with my nose frozen off. The very mountains froze into icebergs, and the persons who would purchase territory in that latitude would be the heaviest ice company in the world.

When we had got some distance beyond where anybody had ever been, we had a little freeze one night, and when we woke the next morning we found ourselves frozen in, and, as we thought, rather frozen out. We had been under the impression that we could get plenty of provisions when we arrived at the North Pole station, and consequently failed to lay in a sufficient quantity to last us long; so the sum of it was we ran out of any thing to eat, and were obliged to chew India rubber which we cut from the vessel. It went pretty rough with us, who had always been used to having our meals regularly, whether our landlords got their pay so or not.

In three months' time it took two men to see where one was, and in six months six men had to get into a huddle before they could be seen at all. I remember I got lost, and it was three days before I found myself, although I was on the hunt, high and low with a double-barreled microscope, and then I wouldn't have found myself had I not heard myself holla for something to eat. Oh, it is terrible to think about it! We would have eaten each other up and made soup of the bones, but there wasn't bones even left of us.

I almost began to despair, and had it not been for the invisible heart beating in my invisible bosom, I would have given up and sunk under the weight of accumulated misfortunes; but, the hope of seeing the famed

Pole, and the honor of signing the papers for its purchase, thereby conferring a blessing on my country which it should never forget, and receiving the thanks of millions yet unborn, etc., etc., kept me alive. I was literally all gone but my mind; I held to that.

Owing to the inefficiency of the postal department in this latitude, we had received no letters from home since we had left, although, by the way, it didn't inconvenience our men very much, as most of them had wives and families at home.

At last, a grizzly bear came near the ship, and, with sixty men, I approached him unperceived, and all of us plunged one lance into his heart and killed and ate him on the spot. This was fortunate, for we were on the point of giving up and returning in triumphant disgrace, but this induced us to sail ahead in spite of the ice, for the North Pole or the next grocery. By and by we entered the open Polar sea—a sea upon whose breast the foot of man had never trod, and which was composed of pure lager beer, without even a bartender to molest or make afraid. Over this pleasant sea, upon which brooded the sunniest of weather, we sped until we came in sight of the North Pole, looming high up, with the North Star on the top of it. Landing on the platform on which it arose, and on which was a ruined stone hotel, built in long ages ago, by some enterprising Yankee, for the accommodation of summer tourists, I took possession of it in name of the American banner and the star-spangled eagle, offering to pay twenty million dollars in return for it to the Polar government, but, as I could find nobody there, I took the money myself and gave a receipt in full. I nailed the flag to the Pole, and then we returned in great glory by another route, in time to take my place as one of the Commissioners to Dan Samingo.

The importance of this acquisition to our government can not be estimated in words. Millions of dollars will accrue annually from it, although I don't see how. That a railroad will one day make a station of the North Pole, I believe; and it will be an important point for our vessels to touch at in their passage from New York to Savannah, by way of Behring's Straits. Our country would never get to be great without it; and after we have purchased Dan Samingo, the Maelstrom, and Riparian Jersey City, what more of the world will be left to buy? Take this fact home with you, my dear readers; go to sleep and let it give you the nightmare. Think on it when you arise in the morning, and give it consideration when you go to take a drink before breakfast.

WASHINGTON WHITEHORN.

THE ROAD TO EVIL.

It is a broad and easy pathway, but the descent, though gradual, never stops. The youth, striking into this pleasant, flowery pathway, with free and springy step, goes on, heedless of danger. Like the boy in the fairy story who followed the butterfly, he notes not the road, nor which way his steps are tending, until, at last, he wakes from a wild dream of pleasure, and sees before him a dark and gloomy forest. He turns in terror to retrace his footsteps, when lo! he finds that a terrible steep hill lies before him. Descending was easy, but to ascend requires a moral courage that he does not possess, for the flowery path that he has followed has lulled it to a deathlike sleep, from whence there is no awaking.

Fathers, look to your boys! Mothers, look to your daughters! Evil is abroad. It flaunts through our land, habited in broadcloth and fine linen, silks and satins; sparkling with diamonds, and other precious stones. Tricky holds high carnival with vice, and modest virtue shrinks abashed. Men in high places are branded with crimes that, in the earlier days of our Republic, would have given them to the stern grasp of Justice. But now the world laughs, bows humbly to these successful rogues, and applauds their deeds.

We say the world; we are wrong. The world at large is still honest and good.

Justice is not all a mockery, and there are men and women whom gold will not buy. The pride and pomp of power does not dazzle them. Beneath the fine clothes they discern the corruption that lurks within the foul body.

Oh, parents! do not instill into the minds of your children the soul-devastating motto: "The end justifies the means!"

Keep them from the belief that gold is every thing in this world, and that the human heart is nothing.

Many a time since the sun began his course the chains of the captive have more become a man than the laurel crown of the conqueror.

Success is not all in this world! Worship no man because he is rich in gold! Look to his actions. If he is a knave, all the jewels in this life will not hide it, nor save him from the judgment to come.

Avoid the common error that riches bring happiness. The rich man often is a slave to the gold for which men envy him.

Often there is far more happiness in the lowly cottage that nestles under the shadow of the greenwood tree by the yellow wheat-field, than in the marble palace of the millionaire that frowns with closed blinds on the city avenue.

Teach not the doctrine: "Get money; honestly, if you can, but, anyway, get it." It is a false beacon light that lures the bark to the "breaking rocks," not to the harbor of safety.

Above all, parents, keep your children out of the streets in the night-time. When the mantle of darkness is over the earth, Vice walks boldly abroad in colors that she dares not flaunt in the sunlight.

Encourage innocent and rational amusements. "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy."

If the children wish to attend some place of amusement in the evening, go with them. Nearly all our public amusements are harmless in themselves; it is the surroundings that are pernicious. The presence of the parents will preserve the children from harm.

But, above all, know where your olive-branches are in the evening. Nearly all that enter the road to evil take their first steps therein in the darkness, not in the light. In the sunbeams they would shrink from that which looks so alluring by night.

A WORD TO YOUNG MEN.

I SAID to a very young gentleman friend, the other day, in reply to a careless remark of his:

"Can you imagine how you would feel if you had a sister?"

"Y-e-s, I think so," was the suddenly sober answer.

"You would guard her innate purity jealously," I said; "you would not wish her to associate in any manner, however slight, with a man who had a taint of evil about him. Can you think of any reason why you should not guard yourself as carefully?"

He confessed his inability, and went away looking sober, and thoughtful, remarking that he "didn't know that he had thought much on the subject."

He is only one among thousands. Young men, generally, are too thoughtless on this subject. I speak positively, because their actions give me proof of the truth of my assertion.

Society grants men many privileges—allows them great freedom of morals. Their character is not of vital importance in the eyes of the world, and among those who avoid evil itself there are many who do not shun the appearance of evil, nor hold themselves aloof from its searing presence.

Sometimes, the idea appears to be widely spread that men and boys can receive no injury from contact with vice. While boys they visit cock-fights and mingle freely with the coarse persons attendant on such interesting doings, lounge about saloons, and attend every street-fight that takes place in their vicinity. As young men they visit the saloons still, frequently not to drink but to see what is to be seen; attend prize-fights and dog-fights; and visit, out of curiosity, houses where no pure-minded man should be found. Yes, really moral men do this, as I before said, out of curiosity! What a strange and mad man a man who stoops to enter such a place from any motive! Unless, indeed, it were with a motive of lifting the wretched inmates from their debased condition. Would any pure woman enter with any other motive? Woman is charged with being possessed of a greater fund of curiosity than man, yet it never yet led her to such a place. Nothing save a desire to benefit the inmates ever called a good woman to these houses, nor would any other motive induce a good man to go there if in his mind, from education and habit, had not imbibed a morbid love of the appearance of evil. The really pure, naturally-developed mind shrinks from contact with vice—the silent influence which every person exerts is felt by it; it feels the weight of evil as an actual, ponderable thing, and shrinks from it naturally, as the pure ever withdraws from the impure.

Analyze the tendency of men's minds to vile scenes—their perfect freedom and at-home air there, and you will find it the result of life-long habit. You will find, also, that there are evil marks as the result of the habit. They may be small—to the eye of the casual observer invisible—but they are there.

But I have followed, as an introduction, a different branch of the subject from the one I wish to speak on particularly. It is all part and parcel of the same thing—the necessarily inevitable effect of the before-mentioned cause. The natural outcropping of the widely-disseminated idea that men can expose themselves to evil without injury, and stoop to trifling acts of a doubtful nature without loss.

For instance: a young man is traveling, and there enters the car, and takes the vacant seat beside him, an over-dressed woman whose face and air at once stamp her as a low character. Perhaps she speaks to him. Is he distant in manner and reserved in reply? No, even though he is a really moral person! He is in no danger, and can lose nothing by an hour's intercourse with her. He replies in a manner that leads her to speak further, is courteous and affable, all while he feels a secret contempt for her, and is amused at her manner. She gets off at the next station, and—that is all. At least so he imagines, but is it? Place his sister in the same position; let a vile man attempt to draw her into conversation, and, if she is a true woman, what is the result? Coldness and reserve on her part that repulses his advances. If she were friendly and affable, what would be the brother's feelings could he witness the affair? He would feel uneasy and indignant, and think: "How can she stoop to talk with that scoundrel? He is too low for a woman to speak to." He would feel that her purity was receiving a taint from contact with so low a person—feel that she stooped from her proud position of true womanhood when she put herself on intimate terms with such a person.

Can any one fail to see the onesidedness of this matter? A man is jealous of his sister's purity, and careful that her name is not spoken carelessly among men, but of himself and his own name he has little care. He not only associates familiarly with evil persons, but he also slimes his purity with vile literature in various forms, as books, novels and sporting papers—matter so low and obscene that he would not for the world that his mother or sisters should know that he possessed such, much less that they should see them. Continually he feeds his mind with gross matter in some form, and no matter in what form it enters, the loathsome serpent Evil leaves its slime.

Young men, think of these things. Mark out the same course for yourself that you wish your sister to pursue. Remember that if in stooping to impure things, however trifling, she receives injury, you in doing the same thing also do. If she is less worthy of reverence because of it, you are, also. Be true to yourselves in every thing. A pure and lofty, truth-loving and truth-living manhood should be the aim of every youth. He who possesses it is truly a MAN, than which no nobler name can be given. He respects himself, is respected by all mankind, and has the approval of God.

LETTIE ARTHUR IRONS.

"BE SURE YOU'RE RIGHT."

THANK YOU, Davy Crockett, for giving to the world so valuable a piece of advice. In my heart, I wish travelers in this sphere would follow it. I dislike the person who came to see me once, while I was engaged penning a letter to a sincere friend. It was but half completed, and I laid it aside, to entertain my guest. During the afternoon I was called down-stairs for about five minutes, to attend to some groceries that had arrived. That five minutes caused me much trouble, for my visitor read over my epistle, and reported it to all the neighborhood, that I was engaged! She was sure she was right: was not my unfinished note an evidence of the truth of her assertions? What I had really written was about my exclusive engagement as a writer for a certain paper.

There once lived, in a certain village, a man who was much addicted to intemperate

habits. He invited a friend out to ride with him. A distillery was not far off. The man said he was obliged to go that way. His friend excused himself, got out of the sleigh, and returned home, reporting to all he met that Mr. Blank had gone to the distillery to get a drink. It proved to be no such thing, for the man never visited the place, but went to carry some clothing to a poor person. Why couldn't the friend be sure he was right before he "went ahead?"

Scamps and swindlers are flooding the country with their circulars; people are complaining of how much they have been cheated. I pity and blame them at the same time. If you want to subscribe for a paper, subscribe with responsible individuals; if you want to purchase a good article, be assured you must pay a good price for it. I have a little slip of paper before me, which informs me, Eve Lawless, that, if I will forward \$5.10, a solid gold watch, worth \$36.00, will be sent to me. I don't want to ruin so kind a firm as to do it.

Seriously speaking, can there be persons foolish enough to believe these scamps would ever fulfill their promises?

When you are ordering an article, be sure you are sending to the right person.

My friends—who are in that blissful state, known as courtship—in all your bickerings and quarrels, be sure you're right; be not jealous without a cause; don't be too exacting with your lovers; if letters don't arrive at the very date you expect them, girls, remember it may be more the fault of the mails than the males.

Young housekeepers, a word with you. If you keep a servant girl, and her "feller" sits up the cold meat in the cupboard, and she informs you it was "the cat," be sure that such is the case. A lady friend of mine was inclined to think cats were very tormenting animals. She was prone to believe everything she heard to be solemn truth; but, when she saw, with her own eyes, her new chambermaid coming down-stairs with a featherbed strapped to her shoulders, and well knowing the featherbed to be her (my friend's) property, it took a great deal of persuasion for her to believe it was all owing to the cat. She is always sure, now, about things, and she don't keep a cat.

The world is only too fond of gossip, and only too glad to pick a person to pieces. If people were a little more sure that what they said was true, don't you think there would be more happiness and less misery among us? I would not be afraid to wager that there are many now bearing the stigma of shame who are innocent of wrong. Some one may have supposed that they said or did such and such a thing, and reported the same. If they had been sure of what was actually transpiring, it would not have hurt them any. In these remarks, I feel sure I am right. Am I? EVE LAWLESS.

CROAKERS.

I FULLY believe that many a scheme which would have resulted in success, has been spoiled by a set of human beings, who are forever croaking and grumbling. If a club in a village wishes to have a picnic, or an excursion, these croakers are sure to put in their say, and dispirit everybody, until the affair is given up. The picnic spoiled, the company miserable, while the croaker enjoys himself with looking on at the unpleasantness he has caused.

Procure a new suit of clothes, and, ten to one, these croakers will say you don't need it. Plan an excursion on the water, Mr. Croaker will prophesy foul weather, and that you will all find a watery grave.

Talk about making a trip to some pleasant place, and expatiate upon the beauties of the scenery, and the rare good time you expect to have. While you are excited at the anticipation of your visit, you will be brought down by the remark of a discontented croaker: "You are not there yet."

Endeavor to start a literary or dramatic society, you'll hear them croak: "What's the use?"

If they come to that, what is the use of doing anything? Why strive or push ahead? Would it not be better to sit down with arms folded and never undertake anything for fear failure should result from it? Suppose we allowed these croakers to influence us all the time, how would our victories be gained? How would our institutions be raised, or our people educated? No doubt the croakers talked to Noah for building the Ark, but he did not listen to them. And what was the result? Why, he was saved.

We are all striving to make arks of ourselves, expelling the bad feeling and retaining the good.

These croakers would have us undertake nothing of benefit to ourselves. They'd advise us not to go to sea, because people have been lost there. They think it foolish to write for the press, because there is so much manuscript rejected. They can not believe in progress, and exclude the motto of "whatever man has done, man may do," from the list.

We must not mind these dismal personages. We must strive and show them that, by perseverance, we can conquer in the end. These joy-killers ought to find a home among the frogs, in some pond, where they can mix with their boon companions, the croakers. F. S. F.

EXPRESSION IN THE EYEBROWS.

THE eyebrows are a part of the face comparatively but little noticed, though in disclosing the real sentiments of the mind scarcely any other features of the face can come into competition. In vain the most prudent female imposes silence on her tongue, in vain she tries to compose her face and eyes: a single movement of the eyebrows instantly discloses what is passing in her soul. Placed upon the skin, and attached to muscles which move them in every direction, the eyebrows are obedient, in consequence of their extreme mobility, to the slightest internal impulses. There majesty, pride, vanity, severity, kindness, the dull and gloomy passions, and the passions soft and gay, are alternately depicted.

The eyebrows alone," said Lavater, the prince of physiognomists, "often give the positive expressions of the character." "Part of the soul," says Pliny, the elder, "resides in the eyebrows, which move at the command of the will." Le Brun, in his treatise on the passions, says, "that the eyebrows are the least equivocal interpreters of the emotions of the heart and of the affections of the soul."

PEACE of mind is as essential to health as it is to happiness.

Readers and Contributors.

TO CORRESPONDENTS AND AUTHORS.—No MSS. received that are not fully prepaid in postage.—No MSS. preserved for future orders.—Unusable MSS. promptly returned only where stamps accompany the inclosure, for such return.—Book MS. postage is two cents for every four ounces, or fraction thereof, but must be marked Book MS., and be sealed in wrappers with open end, in order to pass the mails at "Book rate."—No correspondence of any nature is permissible in a package marked as "Book MS."—MSS. which are imperfect are not used or wanted. In all cases our choice rests first upon merit or fitness; second, upon economy; and third, upon the convenience of our readers. Two MSS. of equal merit we always prefer the shorter.—Never write on both sides of a sheet. Use Commercial Note size paper as most convenient to editor and compositor, tearing off each page as you write, and carefully giving it its full or page number.—Our rejection by no means implies a want of merit. Many MSS. unavailable to us are well worthy of use.—All experienced and popular writers will find us ever ready to give their offerings early attention.—Contributors must look to this column for all information in regard to contributions. We can not write letters except in special cases.

Will find place for "The Trapped Royalist," "The Lettre de Cachet" for "A Woman's Will." The poem, "Bessie Lee," we return. It is very charming, but we have such a stock on hand that its author would not care to avail himself of the sketch. "Felicia's Story," we return. It is very good indeed, but, of the kind, we have enough at present.—Will use "Rube's White Horse" and the "Poetry." "Over the Falls," "The Double Surprise," "The Way the Boys Got their Dinner," "Bound to a Log." Can make no use of poems, "Spring Time," "Come Again," "Prince and Pib," "A Grave," "Speak to me, Dearest." The latter is admirably adapted for music. Send it to some music publisher.—We must reject "The Foolish Editor." The writer evidently misconceives the character of a popular story paper. What is sensationally bad is offensive alike to publishers and readers of those popular weeklies which are most widely circulated. "Great Heart" is excellent, but is a magazine story rather than adapted to a popular paper.—W. J. B. is correct in his guess as to the author's real name.

The MS. by "Mary B. M." is very imperfect. She fixes a price to her contribution. Only authors of well won reputation can do this. No stamps.

HENRY G. A DIME NOVEL is not a TEN CENT NOVEL—in character, least of all in price. DIME NOVELS are those published by Beadle & Co., who by copyright and trade-mark have the exclusive right in the term. The DIME NOVEL is a cheap, popular, and excellent—a substantial, well-composed and perfectly pure work of fiction, and usually of Historical Fiction, photographing what is peculiarly American and our general to our history and civilization. The series comprises many noble works from the pens of our best writers, and well deserves the name and fame it has won. As a series, it is one of the most valuable series ever given to the reading public. All care should be taken not to confound the series with any of the numerous ten cent trashy novels for the public. Those who object to "Dime Novels" make a serious mistake.

We return "Which Was Right." The story is quite good enough for us, but we have no room for it. The author's request for "a line of criticism" we can not answer. It is just as much as we can do to read all the MSS. sent in. To give the why and wherefore of every objection is impossible. The labor of two correspondents could perform. The author's hearty word of commendation of the JOURNAL we shall reserve for another time.

ELITE GRANT. No, we are not in want of the aid you offer. Few, very few "editorial positions" are to be obtained, and the persons well qualified by education, experience, and general fitness for such positions are rare. The number of good writing editors in this great city you can almost reckon by your extended fingers. Write for the press, if you will; encourage and talent on our staff, in any position; study excellent authors to ascertain in what consists their excellence, and thus take the first steps in learning the art of writing, and, by long practice, can you become qualified for the editor's desk.

ICE P. L. An army life is every thing but romantic, and, as a general rule, the worst characters, or, most needy persons, drift into the recruiting offices. The morale of the army service has, of late, immeasurably grown better, but no young man should seek the service who can find any thing else to do.

ASMODEUS. A Commercial College education is all very well, but it no more makes a good bookkeeper than a clean sheet of paper makes a good penman. The best bookkeepers never spent an hour in a "Commercial College."

EXTRA asks: "Which produces the most deadly poisons, the vegetable or the mineral kingdom?" please answer and decide a "wager." It happens that all the most virulent poisons are of vegetable origin. There is the burning nicotine of the deadly aconite, which destroys in small fractions of a grain; and strychnine, a fourth part of a grain of which has killed a wild beast. Before the dawn of the prussic acid, so prevalent in many botanical tribes. Then, there are the deadly alkalies of hemlock and tobacco, and oxalic acid, of treacherous fame—all derived from the vegetable kingdom. Before the rapidly mortal action of some of the vegetable products we have mentioned, arsenic, that terror of the mineral kingdom, is innocence itself and sublimate is impotent.

CLEEK. It is polite when you meet your employer to raise your hat to him, unless you pass him very frequently, in which case you need not look directly at him, but pass on quietly.

E. M. inquires for a receipt to whiten the nails. Take diluted sulphuric acid, two drachms; tincture of myrrh, one drachm; spring water, one ounce; mix. First cleanse with white soap and then dip the fingers into the mixture. A good hand is one of the chief points of beauty; and this application is really effective.

DOUBTER. Your statement is not correct. The life assurance tables are prepared with a great deal of care, and in that case, you are right. Perhaps one of the most remarkable examples of the value of general laws is to be found in life assurances; for what apparently can be more precarious and uncertain than the durability of life in any individual? Yet, in the aggregate, mortality is so regular that it has been said by an eminent mathematician, that there is no case in which the future can be so prudently conducted life assurance society. If we take five thousand persons in the prime of life, six hundred die in the first year, one hundred in the second ten years, eight hundred and fifty in the third. The experience under different circumstances varies but little, as Jenkins Jones, Nelson and Parson have shown; and it is a curious fact that lives which might be called first-class are as prone to disease as those which appear to belong hardly to so high a class.

ALICE asks: "How can I preserve my complexion?" Have you ever heard of Diana of Poitiers, the peerless French beauty, so famous for looking young at fifty years of age? How did you imagine she preserved her complexion? Not by shrinking from air and water. She rose early; applied pure refreshments to her face; she used no violet and heart powder, but woke early, washed her dew on the meadows, then returned to a hearty breakfast; she never gave way to fierce feelings but composed herself to rest, and, in the evening, she used Diana, but take a hint from her toilette.

Egypt. Hieroglyphics consist in certain symbols which are made to stand for invisible objects, on account of some of the characters together, as a serpent supposed to bear to the objects. Egypt was the country where this sort of writing was most studied, and perfected into regular science. In that country was conveyed all the boasted knowledge of the priests. According to the properties which they ascribed to animals, they chose them to be the emblems of moral objects. Thus, ingratitude was expressed by a viper; imprudence by a fly; wisdom by an ant; knowledge by an eye; eternity by a circle, which has never beginning or end; a man universally honored, by an eagle, which they supposed to be found with no other fish. Sometimes they joined two or three of these characters together, as a serpent with a hawk's head denoted nature with the Supreme Ruler presiding over it. A Mummy is an embalmed body; so embalmed, because of the Egyptian word mummy, which is embalming. The custom of embalming originated in a vanity amongst the Egyptians of being considered immortal.

B. E. T. Don't despair because the way ahead looks dark. To succeed we must look deep down, and go forth with the conviction that merit will ever rise superior to opposition, and draw us even from envy or reproach. The vapors which gather around the rising sun and follow him in his course, seldom fall at the close of it to form a magnificent theater for his reception, and to invest with variegated tints, and with a softened effulgence, the luminary that can not hide. As to envy, remember that "He who climbs high challenges a remark from all," and if it is surrounded on all sides by the brightness of another's prosperity—like the scorpion confined within a circle of fire—it will sting itself to death.

BLANCHET. Yes, The Reverend Dr. Houghton is the pastor of the "Little church around the corner."

L. W. McG. Base-balls are served with waxed flax thread, such as shoemakers use. No.

HENRY D. Judge Mason, of Virginia, whose death was recently announced, was John W. Mason, and was the Mason who was captured on his way to England, by Commodore Wilkes, during the War for the Union.

Unanswered questions on hand will appear next week.

THE BRIDAL EVE.

BY CLARENCE ASHWOOD.

Stay, oh, time, thy rapid flight,
Linger on thy course this night;
Night of sorrow—night of woe—
Yet I would not bid thee go:
For a deeper grief will come
Ere another day is done;
Soon, with one I scorn allied,
To-morrow—an unwilling bride!

What is wealth and state to me
Who have roamed in fancy free,
Like the bird from flower to flower,
Thinking not of gold or power?
Better far my cottage walls
Than these gilded palace halls;
Soon with one I scorn allied,
To-morrow—an unwilling bride!

At my window, hark! I hear,
The voice of one I love most dear;
In eager tones he bids me come
And share with him his distant home.
"O'er the hills and far away,"
Ere the dawning of the day,
Soon with one I love allied,
A poor, but then a willing bride!

The Mask Unmasked.

A HINT TO YOUNG MEN.

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

"ETHELIN, take my advice in this affair. Gerald Montessor is not the man for you to marry."

Pretty little Ethelyn Lexington shrugged her dimpled shoulders.

"Why not, pray, grave Sir Mentor? I am sure Mr. Montessor is just as worthy as another gentleman I might mention."

She smiled archly in her cousin's face—a proud, stern face it was, too, that Sydney Carlingford had, with flashing hazel eyes that were wearing a gloom in their depths as he listened, without a smile, to fairy Ethelyn, standing on tiptoe beside him, and yet not reaching to his shoulder.

He was thinking of many things as he gazed steadily down on her arch, sweet face that laughed, and flushed and dimpled under those darkening eyes of his; and most of all he thought what a fearful blow it would be to him to give this girl whom he had loved these many years, to such a man as Gerald Montessor.

It would have been bad enough to see her married to any man; but, to this lover of all, it was anguish for him to contemplate it.

And Ethelyn was so innocent, so guileless that she never dreamed of looking to see if her golden-headed god had clay feet; it was enough that she loved what she saw.

She did love this Gerald Montessor, with all the fondness of her confiding nature; she was immeasurably proud of him, too; for was not he so handsome, so intelligent, so perfectly versed in all the delightful little arts of polished society?

She pitied Sydney—proud, silent Sydney Carlingford, who had worshipped her ever since she had been old enough to send him imperiously on her little errands, and then thank him, with those rare blue eyes, and that flushing, dimpling face.

She had often thought, before Gerald Montessor had crossed her path, that to be the wife of Sydney Carlingford would be the greatest bliss on earth. But, somehow, she had drifted away from that belief lately, and had freely, honestly come to believe that hers should be a life very far above what Sydney's wife would be; that she would fill just such a position as Gerald Montessor described, so eloquently.

She had sweet dreams, this fair, dove-eyed girl, of the day when Gerald Montessor would ask her to be his bride; he loved her already, she knew—because did not those exquisite flowers, and the elegant pearl cross, he had sent, mean love, and nothing but love?

Sydney Carlingford came in, grave, stern as ever, one bright, cool April night, when Ethelyn was nestling away in the crimson-curtained bay-window, dreaming as she always was doing, and building such delightful chateaux d'Espagne.

"You almost give me the blues, Sydney; you look so ice-bergish. Come, sit down, and see if you won't thaw a little."

But, if her words were sarcastic, her tone was kind, even winning, and Sydney's heart throbbed at the very sound of it.

"It's not the blues, Ethelyn—it's because it hurts me so to know you don't care for me any more. You did once, you know."

She blushed painfully, and Sydney thought what an awkward booby he was.

"I don't mean to wound you, my little cousin; you know I'd do anything to serve you; besides, Ethie—well, I'm so jealous of this Gerald Montessor, that I hardly know what I'm about. And you're too good for him, as I've told you a hundred times. Oh, Ethie, it's so plain to me that he's only flirting with you."

Ethelyn's blue eyes opened widely; first wearing an expression of surprise, then a little of fear.

"Oh! Sydney, you don't mean to say that! You ought not to talk that way because—because—"

"I'm jealous!" he supplied her hesitating words, with a short, harsh laugh.

"I'm so sorry if you are; so very sorry; but, how can I help it, Sydney?"

Her low, deprecating voice and upraised eyes were firing that loving heart, but he swallowed down the great lump that was choking him—he forced back the impulse to kiss those sweet, cherry-red lips.

"Then again, Sydney, I never could love you if you malign him to me—even if I knew he was unworthy to be loved by me!"

"Ethie!" he said, snatching her hands, "your words give me a wild, sudden hope. May I prove his unworthiness? If I can satisfy you that he is unworthy, will you—will you—love me again?"

But Ethelyn's eyes flashed out.

"You can't do it! Gerald is a true gentleman, and I'll believe nothing against him. I expect him to-night."

She added the last words in a low, decided voice, and Sydney Carlingford rose instantly from his seat.

"Oh! good-night."

But somehow Ethie couldn't forget what he said while she sat there in the early dusk, watching the stars come out, and waiting for Gerald Montessor.

It was not very long before she heard the well-known step on the sidewalk, then on the front piazza, and then just beside her; for Mr. Montessor had learned to be very intimate in the Lexington family.

"You were watching for me, were you, puss?"

This handsome, elegant lover had a low-voiced, confidential way of saying the most commonplace words, so that they conveyed more than they really meant.

Ethelyn flushed up to her very eyes.

"The evening is so delightful, and I'd just finished practicing, because the room was darkening. I'll light the gas now."

Gerald Montessor was a good-looking man, even under the bright rays of the chandelier, and Ethelyn forgot Sydney Carlingford's warning as she listened to his gay, affectionate voice, and saw how stylish and *nonchalant* he was.

"I passed Mr. Carlingford just down the street. He's a curious sort of fellow."

"I think a great deal of cousin Sydney, Mr. Montessor; he went from here as you came in."

"Which accounts for his own grum looks; I suspect he wishes he were as much in favor as I."

A rather conceited speech, but it failed to strike Ethelyn. Mr. Montessor's faults generally did escape her, somehow.

"You are going to the ball on the seventeenth, of course, Ethie? I fancy it will be a fine affair—masquerades generally are."

"If I can, yes. Sydney is going, and—"

"He's not going with you, though, little Miss Ethie, for I shall claim that honor and pleasure. You'll grant me the favor?"

And Ethelyn, so happy, answered yes.

Mr. Montessor didn't stay long after that, and Ethie wondered what Sydney would say when he knew that she was going with Mr. Montessor instead of with him, as she had intended.

"I will never ask another favor of you so long as I live, Ethelyn, if you'll grant this one."

She knew Sydney Carlingford was very much in earnest, because he did not call her Ethie; so she looked wonderingly up into his eyes.

"I ought to know it first; perhaps I can—certainly I will, if it is prudent."

"Then be guided by me for this one night only, Ethelyn. I want you to let me take another costume for you to this ball, and when I tell you, to put it on. Say, Ethelyn, will you—won't you?"

She smiled at his eagerness, but he shook his head.

"Don't make light of it, my darling Ethie, because I am going to put my happiness for life in the balance to-night. I am going to prove to you that that man is not worthy of you. No, Ethie, don't frown; you must promise this once."

There was something in his eyes and voice that she could not resist; and she promised, while a great, sudden light leapt to Sydney's eyes.

Ethelyn was very fair in her personation of "Undine," and Gerald Montessor, in his elaborate king's suit, was complimenting her as they stood under the gas-jet with the crowd surging around them.

"If you'll excuse me now, Ethie, for an hour or so? You'll find plenty of partners, doubtless. Keep the third Lanciers for me—don't forget."

He had just disappeared, when Sydney's voice was in her ears.

"Come, be quick, Ethie. In the ladies' dressing-room you will find a page's suit—the maid will help you dress—meet me at the ladies' entrance in ten minutes. I shall wear a white domino, with a black star on the back, over my uniform."

Sydney had whispered hurriedly as he had drawn her toward the door, and almost before she knew she had entered the dressing-room.

She was flushed and feverish from excitement, but her fingers flew, and she was ready in less than ten minutes; then she sauntered carelessly down the stairs, and met the white domino at the foot of the steps.

"Ethie, you will trust me wholly? I am going to take you where you never have been before, but you are safe with me. All I ask is a just reward—you know what that will be if you—"

At that moment Sidney opened the door of the bar-room and the two entered, crowding through, unnoticed among the throng.

Ethie was shivering and excited; through her scarlet mask she was scanning the costumes. Yes, there was Gerald Montessor, his yellow satin cape thrown over one shoulder, his mask removed from his handsome, flushed face.

"What's that you said?"

Ethie heard him plainly as Sydney, and she pushed through the throng nearer to where Gerald was eagerly calling for another glass of rum punch.

"Oh, my girl, you said? I don't know where she is, I'm sure, nor care much either. That's getting to be a played out game, that is; a fellow wants a change, you know."

And he tossed off the liquor at a single gulp.

Sydney pressed Ethie's fingers, and they went out into the cool night air.

"Oh, Sydney—take me home; do, please—I am so—"

And she began crying bitterly.

"I know you are insulted, wounded, mortified; but, God helping me, Ethie, I'll try to make you forget it, if you but give me the right to do so. Ethie, darling, I've watched and waited for this chance—now, am I to be rewarded?"

He was whispering lowly as they stood on the sidewalk, waiting for a carriage.

"Sydney, I will be yours—only wait till I get a little over this. You will?"

And when the maid brought Ethie's shawl to her, as she stood leaning on Sydney's arm, Gerald Montessor, his mask in his hand, came suddenly upon them.

"Why—what the—what does this mean?"

He glanced at Sydney's cold face, and at Ethie's glowing cheeks and strange attire.

"It means, Mr. Montessor," and Ethie's voice was sharp and frigid, "that I have heard your gentlemanly remarks in that bar-room about 'your girl,' and as you desire a change, perhaps the sooner the 'game is played out' the better."

And she turned tenderly to Sydney, who assisted her in the carriage.

While Gerald Montessor realized, as many a young man should realize, that the sacred name of the lady who honors him with her friendship, is not to be bandied about in a bar-room by lips flushed and moist with liquor.

At her parlor door, Ethelyn besought Sydney to enter; and there, at the solemn midnight hour, with her trailing white domino, that Sydney had removed from over his uniform, lying a white cloud around her, she thanked him, on her knees, in her impulsive, charming way, for his solicitude, and promised him the reward he claimed.

A Dangerous Game.

BY TILLIE HARTE.

"So you've thrown her over, Phil? Well, you ought to be tarred and feathered for breaking her heart so cruelly."

"You really think so?" asked Phil Estey, twirling his heavy brown moustache.

"Gracie Clyde's a very nice little girl, Wallace, but I can't see that a fellow is bound to keep an engagement when he has good reason to change his mind. Confound it, Wallace, I'm tired of little Clyde; besides, there's that magnificent Augusta Vane, with eyes like an ebon star, and lips as red as a sun-ripened cherry."

Phil Estey looked the very picture of self-satisfaction as he thus described the lady's charms.

Wallace Vernon's forehead was contracted into a frown.

"I don't care if Miss Vane is the greatest beauty in America, and an heiress as well;

and full of curly waves; brilliant scarlet cheeks and lips, with white teeth gleaming between."

She was dressed in a morning robe of white muslin, trimmed with black, and sat in indolent gracefulness, awaiting her admirer's morning call.

"I wonder if he will propose?" she said, to herself, as a frown gathered on her forehead.

"The game is getting too dangerous for enjoyment; but, if I can only bring him to my feet—only prevail upon him for an early marriage, I am all right!"

Phil Estey as they do Miss Jane Simmons, alias Miss Augusta Vane. My funds are running low, too."

So the beauty meditated, and then her face lighted up as she heard Mr. Estey's foot-fall in the hall.

He had but just entered, when the proprietor of the hotel tapped at the door.

"There are two gentlemen to see you, Miss Vane."

She smiled pleasantly.

"Show them in the private parlor, please, Mr. Smith, and I'll come down. It is my brother and brother-in-law," she added, turning to Estey.

"Not much," interrupted a strange, harsh voice, and a police-officer entered the room.

She turned deadly pale, and a cold, steely glitter came to her intensely black eyes.

Estey sprang to his feet in a passion.

"How dare you enter this room uninvited? This is Miss Vane, and she is under my protection."

The officer laughed again.

"Well, if you want to protect a thief, all right!" Then, turning to the woman, he laid his hand on her shoulder.

"I arrest you, Jane Simmons, for the larceny of a solitary diamond ring, abstracted from the house of Mrs. Tunis, in New York, while you were in her employ."

A stifled cry came from Estey's lips, and he turned to the prisoner.

"It is true," she said, calmly. "I see no use of denying it. I am ready to go with you, and I have the satisfaction of knowing you can not undo the past three months, whose pleasure I bought with the proceeds of the sale of the solitaire ring."

Phil Estey never quite remembered how or when he went out of that hotel. Several days after he called at Gracie Clyde's house.

"I know I don't deserve to be noticed by you, Gracie, but I want to tell you how I have suffered for my wickedness. You did



THE MASK UNMASKED.

love me, Gracie, and I know you can forgive me."

He took her hands as he spoke.

"Certainly. I'll forgive you, Mr. Estey."

"And love me again? and renew our engagement?"

A little blush crept to her cheeks; she drew her hands away, and answered, very coolly:

"That is impossible. I have given my heart irrevocably into Mr. Vernon's keeping; we are engaged to each other."

It was true; they had played at being in love, and it had come true!

Phil Estey went away a wretched, deservingly miserable man.

Hoodwinked:

OR, DEAD AND ALIVE.

A Tale of Man's Perfidy and Woman's Faith.

BY A. P. MORRIS, JR.

AUTHOR OF "RALPH HAMON, THE CHEMIST," "THE WARNING ARROW," ETC.

CHAPTER XVI.

A RESURRECTION.

WHEN Superintendent Simon Jeremiah Ebenezer Kraak returned to the tomb, Victor had removed the whole coffin-lid, torn away that portion of the shroud which confined the hands, and the latter he was rubbing and chafing.

Receiving the pitcher of water which Kraak brought, he poured some of the cooling liquid upon the merchant's face, and profusely bathed the pallid temples.

"He is alive," whispered the superintendent, as he gazed in an awed manner at Victor's proceedings. Now that he saw there was life in the body, he no longer upon reflection, considered his companion crazy; but waited anxiously, assisted cheerfully in the operation to restore Calvert Herndon to consciousness.

Their persistent endeavors were at last rewarded. The merchant opened his eyes, and exclaimed, in a weak voice: "Victor, God bless you!"

Then, as he caught sight of the pitcher, he started to a sitting posture, and outstretched his hands toward it in eager pleading; while Kraak, totally unprepared for such a movement, sprang backward, as though a grinning skeleton or hungry ghoul were about to grasp him.

Victor did not permit the rescued man to

imbibe too copious a draught, lest the reaction might prostrate him, but slowly satiated Herndon's thirst to an extent which he deemed proper.

"More, Victor, more!" he cried.

"No, Mr. Herndon; too much will injure you. Come—let me assist you from your unpleasant position," and as he thus spoke, how his heart throbbed! How the warm blood coursed through his veins! He had saved a precious life.

"Lord save me!" exclaimed Kraak, as he came forward to assist; "here's the whole of my dream out. Something strange brewing; fearful discoveries, etc., etc., etc. And now, young man, you see, I am more firm than ever in the belief of dreams. So, now we'll get this gentleman from his horrible bed. Ugh! what a predicament he has been in!"

They gently raised Herndon from out the coffin, placing him upon his feet, and supporting him. When they led him a step forward, a cry of pain was wrung from his lips, owing to the stiffened condition of his limbs.

Victor and the merchant embraced. Their eyes were humid with tears, and their voices choked. It was a picture—the rescuer and the rescued, two men, within a tomb, clasped in each other's arms, weeping like children; while Kraak stood to one side, holding the lantern, whose flickering ray was an auxiliary to the impressive solemnity of the scene; and the superintendent's face was expressive of deepest feeling: the eyes that had so recently started wide open with terror, now half-closed to check the sympathetic tear which trickled in a hot line down his cheek.

When the first mutual transport was in a measure lulled, they would have entered into explanations then and there; but Kraak said:

"Come, gentlemen, it's a bad omen to spend time talking among the dead. My valuable dream-book cautions against that. So, we'll go back to my little house, where you can talk as much as you please. Come."

Before leaving the tomb, Victor readjusted the coffin-lid, and then they went out, closed and locked the iron wicket, and continued slowly toward the house at the entrance gate—Herndon supported by them, one on each side.

When they reached the house, the superintendent produced some wine and edibles from a well-lardered closet, and set them before the famished man.

Herndon appeased his hunger and thirst, and at the conclusion of the impromptu meal, a suit of clothes was furnished. A few moments sufficed to change the merchant's apparel from that of the dead to that of the living; and, though still very weak and pale, he gradually regained something of his old vigor.

Then ensued a lengthy conversation and explanation. The merchant told his terrible suffering when, awaking from an insensibility he could not account for, he found himself within the suffocating confines of a coffin. Kraak sat silent, marveling, his mouth opened wide; he leaned forward as if fearing to lose any portion of the recital; his eyes were now enlarged with wonder, as they had been with fright when Victor forced him to the tomb.

Victor Hassan also told his story, narrated his experiences, and brought charge against Hallison Blair for all that had transpired. He made known how the Englishman had declared that Pauline was his, on account of change of determination on the part of her father, ere the latter died, and concluded by denouncing Lord Blair as the author of all the evil done.

Herndon reflected over the matter long and silently, and was forced to the conviction that Victor's suspicions were well founded—that it must be Hallison Blair who had perpetrated all this foul work.

"But come," said Victor, after a considerable pause, "what shall be our course now? Hallison Blair must certainly believe us both dead. What shall we do?—face him at once?"

"No, no, Victor; let us wait," and the reply was half-involuntary, as though the speaker was thinking deeply; "I am very weak after the trying experiences I have passed through. My brain is confused. Let us wait awhile. We must now feel our way, for an enemy so unscrupulous would still find means to accomplish his ends if he were to suspect of our existence. He has, doubtless, so covered his tracks, in this desperate game, that, even now, we would be thwarted if we should confront him. I am now resolved upon one thing—to give the villain an opportunity to consummate the villainy he has plotted, that his ruin may be overwhelming. It is the only way, I am convinced, by which we can convict the scoundrel, and convict him I will, at any cost. But secrecy and silence are now all essential, if we would succeed."

"I feel that this is the wisest course, if we would give the villain his deserts. But oh, think of Pauline's position! Can we not communicate with her?" Victor spoke with great earnestness.

"We'll see. My heart is heavy for her, but we'll make her happy yet, my boy!" and the merchant clasped the young man's hand fervently.

Victor sighed. To wait now was agony, but prudence approved the merchant's suggestions; and so it was resolved to seek a secret boarding-place—to let events develop, and to act as the future should determine, but always to be watchful.

So, dispatching Kraak for a cab, the two men bade the superintendent adieu, at early dawn, and driving to the house of Herndon's old servant, they were, by six o'clock, safely domiciled under the wondering but happy old servitor's roof.

But both men had counted too much on their own strength, for the reaction, after so much excitement, followed; and so utterly prostrated was the merchant that a low fever set in, and a lethargy succeeded which gave Victor the keenest anxiety, and for two days he never left the bedside. A physician was then summoned, and he pronounced the case one of complete nervous exhaustion; absolute rest and freedom from excitement was his only hope.

Ah, how wearily passed the hours to both father and lover! But, had they known all that was transpiring in the Home Mansion, not even that sick couch could have held them prisoners.

The old servant, having been commissioned to watch over the Mansion and to act as spy on Blair's proceedings, kept the two men apparently well informed, and thus, in a measure, allayed their anxiety; but the simple-minded old man was no match for such secrecy and art as Lord Hallison Blair could practice, for he learned nothing of the projected marriage of Pauline, and was astounded, one day, to see a party proceed

from the mansion to St. Paul's, whither he followed it, and there learning what was to transpire, flew to the sick-chamber to apprise the merchant of the proceeding.

It was a terrible announcement. "What? Pauline to be married to Lord Blair?" fairly screamed Victor.

"So the usher told me; and all the servants were there," said the old man, sadly. "Oh, Heaven! is this the end for which that villain has plotted?" moaned the merchant, as he sprang up in his bed and attempted to arise. Reaching the floor, he staggered, then fell heavily, overcome with excitement.

"On the bed with him, James!" cried Victor. "Tell him I am gone to the church," and away the frenzied young man went, little caring who saw him, or what might happen.

He reached St. Paul to behold the crowd at the door blocking up its entrance. To get in was impossible, but on the hushed air came the words, distinct and solemn: "*Lay down these men and wife, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Amen.*"

"Too late! Too late!" groaned the young man, as he stood there like one stupefied. "Oh, Pauline! Lost to me—lost!" He struck his hand to his half-crazed forehead. "The culture has seized the dove, but I will throttle the culture, and save her yet! Yes; lost to me, but she shall not perish."

He was aroused by the pressing backward of the crowd. The usher was opening the way for the bride and groom to pass down the side to the carriage in waiting. To get now with prudence was an instinct. Drawing forth his memorandum, the young man penned a few words, tore out and folded the leaf closely, and pressing up to the footman of the carriage, put it in his hand.

"Give this to the lady as she passes into the carriage, will you? Here is something for your trouble."

The footman, beholding a five-dollar gold-piece in his palm, smiled, and responded with alacrity: "Certainly, sir; with pleasure, sir!" and Victor hurried on over the way to witness the end.

The bridal-party came forth: Pauline was passed into the carriage by Lord Blair, but her veil caught, as by accident, in the carriage door-knob, and she paused to dislodge it. It was the footman's ruse to get at her hand, into which he slipped the little piece of paper, and Victor's message was safe in her keeping.

Did she know it was a message from her mysteriously-absent lover? that she clasped it so fervently, and looked so inquiringly into the footman's smiling face?

The carriage rolled away, and Victor, with a heart as heavy and yet as hot as molten lead, hastened back to the sick-chamber of the now doubly-bereaved father.

CHAPTER XVII.
ANOTHER DREAM.

Back again to London.

In a quiet section of that vast, overgrown metropolis of the British empire was situated a neat cottage owned by a widow lady, whose needle and spare rooms were her sole support—the latter generally being let to students who sought the quietude and privacy of the locality in which to pursue, with more ardency, their studies.

At a certain date subsequent to the occurrences set forth in our last chapter, there were three upper rooms in this cottage engaged and in use by four Americans, who, for reasons of their own, preferred the humble accommodations provided here to the blazing luxury of hotels.

It was the close of a fine day, the diamond stars, in myriad number, peeping from their cerulean canopy in merry twinkles, and the bustling widow had just come down-stairs, after having carried the lamps to her guests.

In one of the rooms, seated with his elbows on a table, his chin supported in his hands, and eyes fixed steadfastly upon the pages of a book, was a man whose small stature, spare features, grizzled locks, and genial expression of countenance, at once introduced our bachelor friend of Laurel Hill cemetery, Simon Jeremiah Ebenezer Kraak. The book in which he appears to be so obliquely absorbed is his favorite Book of Dreams; though, as he sits, seemingly so interested and lost to his surroundings, his mind does not dwell wholly on the printed lines. At least, his eyes have rested, for the last five minutes, on the same word, and a train of thought was flashing through his brain, something like the following:

"So I, Kraak, once a young man, now an old man; once a poor man, then a rich man; then again poor; and, at sundry times in my brief bachelor state, first a school-boy, then a clerk, then a cook—luckily it was that I learned to cook when I was a boy—at times doing nothing, at times doing something, alternately nothing and something, somehow, with somebody, and again with nobody, for in my youth, my accommodation in every thing made me valuable; finally a superintendent of graves, a watcher of ghostly flocks, a protector of inanimate flesh from the claws of thieving body-snatchers—I, as I said before, am reduced to a rather odd and enjoyable situation. Here I am; and that's good enough. My board is paid; I've nothing to do; I shouldn't complain, I don't complain, I won't complain. Mr. Herndon—silly man to spend his money on me—has promised me idleness and ease for the rest of my old days. I am simply to swear that I saw Mr. Hassan get the old gentleman out of a coffin. Swear that I saw it with my own eyes. My own? Of course! how could I see with another man's eyes? Umph! Why couldn't I have stayed in America and done this? Isn't there plenty of paper, envelopes, stamps, ships, mails, etc., etc.? But there's where I'm a fool again! I'm better off in England than in America; not that there's any thing in the change of air, mode of law, or the like—I've heard a great deal of talk about 'dear old England,' and that sort of thing, but what does it amount to? Shucks! Spoiled shucks, at that, as soon as you get there! It isn't like America—the home of freemen, the haven for warm hearts and true souls, a generous refuge from the pricking malice of a royal despot, the fortress to defy the world; ah! me! my country 'tis of thee, sweet land of liberty, etc., etc. But it's because I've no marble slabs, and pointed monuments with imitation angels to guard; and when I go to sleep, I don't expect to wake up and find an unrested dead body perambulating at my bedside. I knew by the dream I had that something was going to turn up, and it has—it has! Lord! what strange things have happened since I had that dream! That reminds me, by the way, I was looking for an explanation of the dream I had the other night. It was a very queer one, I think. Let me see, now,

what my book says about it." And arousing from his meditation, he whisked the leaves over in search of something which seemed determined to elude him, and which something, he was sure, was to be found in his valuable Dream Book.

In another room, we find the tidy, pretty-featured Kate, the waiting maid, who saved Victor Hassan's life at the Home Mansion.

Calvert Herndon and Victor Hassan are seated, conversing, in a third room at the home of the widow.

"We have done nothing yet, Victor."

"No," returned the young man, "nothing at all," his tone low and thoughtful, like his friend's.

"And you have seen Pauline?"

"Twice," was the reply, and Victor's face wore a pained expression; "once, I saw her on the drive at Hyde Park; a second time, passing through this very street in her barouche."

"How did she look, Victor? Did she see you?"

"No; she saw me not. Her appearance—alas, my heart throbs when I recollect; for I could not see in Lady Blair the sweet, gentle Pauline, who was once mine. Oh! how my brain whelms with grief!"

"Cheer up, Victor. Do not grow so desponding, my dear boy. I am tortured beyond measure, and you must aid me in retaining mental strength; for, remember, I am older than you, very many years, and besides, Pauline being my own, only, warmly cherished child, my agony of mind is no less, if not more than yours. We shall strike our blow ere long, and crush the villains who have wrought our mutual misery. We shall, at least, see meted out that punishment so justly merited by the wicked. Come, bear up."

Victor arose from his chair. "Let us go out for a walk, Mr. Herndon. I must have some fresh air. I am nearly choked in this confinement. Will you go with me for a short stroll?"

"Yes, yes; I need a draught of the pure air, too," Victor took a walk.

He did not finish his speech, for, at that instant, the door opened, and Kraak rushed into the room, carrying the Dream Book in his hand, and his face betraying a high state of inward satisfaction.

"Here! Here!" he cried, jubilantly. "Look! Listen! I've found it—here it is! I knew it was here. I always find it here. I've got it! I—I—"

"What, Mr. Kraak?" inquired Victor, while he and Herndon found it impossible to refrain from smiling.

"Why, my dream, of course!" answered Kraak. "Here it is!"

"Your dream?" interrupted Victor. "We were unaware that you had had any recent vision."

"That's a fact," realized Kraak. "I didn't tell you of it. Well, then, you must know that, night before last—"

"The evening we had the wine in our rooms?" inserted the young man, suggestively.

"Ay, that was the night," assented Kraak, not seeing the point. "I went to bed rather late, you know—then I, rather late—but, that I hadn't any thing to do with it! I fell asleep in my chair. I dreamed there were a great many packs of cards—all alive! Do you hear that? All alive! And these cards were dancing about, making faces at me. The 'aces' were funny things with funnier heads; and the 'ten-spots' were rats and spiders, and all that sort of thing. Do you hear?—rats and spiders! Mind. They all jumped—the cards did—trying to break their pasteboard necks; and then settled down to pairs, playing euchre. I was playing too. We played and played, and I was losing all the time. I looked up, and who do you suppose I had for an adversary? But, hear this!" (Reading from the book.)

"To dream of cards is an unlucky omen. Do you hear? Unlucky! Further: though this may, in a measure, depend upon the kind of an antagonist you should have. Antagonist! Mind, now! 'If he or she be good-looking, you may surmount the difficulty in store; but, if he or she be coarse, rough, ugly, you may safely depend upon a trying experience.' Hear? If your antagonist is ugly, you'll have hard times. Now, then, we're going to have hard times. Why? Because my antagonist was any thing but handsome. In fact, it was old Nick, Satan, the devil himself, with horns, fins, claws, cloven feet, etc., etc. Don't you see what's coming? And now, what are we to do? This will come to pass; my Dream Book says so, and it never lies."

The ex-superintendent walked to and fro in tragic style, his eyes bent upon the paragraph of valuable information, reading and re-reading, as if resolved to commit it to memory, unmixed with baser matters.

Calvert Herndon and Victor Hassan had found Kraak, with his eccentric moods, and ridiculously grave faith in dreams, intermixed with a humor that never was reduced to absolute seriousness, a pleasant relief to the dull monotony of life which existed to them always; and it was their aim to encourage, rather than be given to fault-finding with the bachelor. So that, on this occasion, they affected a serious consideration of his discovery, lauded the promptness of the Dream Book in explaining dreams, visions, presentiments, and promised to take steps guarding against the pending calamity.

This fully satisfied Kraak, and leaving him to more minutely analyze the vision and its signification, they went out for the stroll which the ex-superintendent's unceremonious advent had delayed.

As we stated at the opening of this chapter, the section in which was situated the boarding-house, was a quiet one; and now, as they left their rooms and entered the street, there prevailed a pleasant air of solitude. They walked slowly and in silence, each wrapt in meditations of his own, and half regardless of the direction they pursued, only intent upon their reflections.

A few blocks were gone over in this manner, when, as they passed beneath a street lamp, they were recalled to a sense of the present, by something that flitted before them, quick, hasty, without a pause, and uttered a slight scream.

CHAPTER XVIII.
A MARVELOUS REVELATION.

THAT which darted past our friends, Calvert Herndon and Victor Hassan, so suddenly, so abruptly, like a phantom, was the figure of a woman, whose startled cry and eagerness to flee from them at once arrested their attention.

Her flight was a short one. She seemed exhausted, for she clutched at the iron railings before a near house, and then sunk down upon the steps, where she lay motionless and hardly discernible in the gloom.

As they reached her, she uttered a stifled groan, and moaned:

"Oh! don't take me! Don't! I was not begging. I—!" she evidently imagined them to be policemen, for, happening at that instant to mark their civilian garb, her tone changed, and she continued:

"Oh! sirs, pardon me. I am starving—dying! Give me food. Give me something to eat!"

"My good woman," began Herndon, but she interrupted him with:

"Charity! Give me food! I am dying!" and her voice grew fainter rapidly.

"She is dying!" exclaimed Victor.

"Yes, yes. Oh! give me food!" wailed she.

"This will never do," Herndon said. "She must have nourishment. Poor beggar!—strange that the authorities will not provide for you better than they do. But, where can we get you food? We are strangers here."

Raising her arm with an effort, she pointed toward a shop window on the opposite side of the street; but her voice failed her. Victor immediately ran across to the place indicated. On his return, he found a cab standing where he had left the merchant.

"Here, Victor," called Herndon, from the interior of the vehicle. "We are in here. Hurry. She's gasping."

"Give me food!" brokenly plead this charge, so strangely dependent upon their bounty; and the young man, as he got inside, and took his seat, handed her two loaves of some wine that he had brought. The driver closed the door, and mounting to his box, drove off.

"Where are we going, Mr. Herndon?" Victor asked, glancing at the starved woman, who was savagely munching the bread, and as eagerly gulping the wine from the bottle—almost checking her respiration.

"To take this woman home," was the merchant's reply. "While you were gone, she told me where she lived, and entreated me to take her there. I thought we could not neglect her—she is in a pitiable condition; not having tasted food for nearly four days; and, besides, she is stricken with disease. The driver has his directions."

The carriage rolled on through the streets, a silence reigning among its occupants, unbroken save by the sound of eating and drinking made by the woman, who, to judge by her actions, must, surely, have been without any thing to eat for fully the length of time she had avowed.

So occupied was she, devouring the food, and drinking the strengthening wine, that she could find no words in which to thank her benefactors.

They stopped shortly before a miserable hovel located in a filthy alley, and where an impenetrable darkness shrouded them.

"Do you live here, my good woman?" inquired Herndon.

"Yes, yes; help me into the house. I—I'm dying—dying—dying."

They assisted her out, and Herndon supported her into the crumbling dwelling.

As Victor turned from the cabman, with whom he had been settling, the latter said:

"I'd advise ye to be cautious, mister. This cove's a bad neighborhood; an' that old hag what's got ye here ain't too good to let ye off 'thout some harm, or the likes—mind now, I tell ye."

But, though the caution would have been, as a general thing, valuable to one unfamiliar with the countless modes adopted by shrewd villainy for the perpetration of crime, in this instance it was not required, for the reason that she whom they had brought there was dying, through dread disease and gnawing hunger.

When the merchant entered the foul-smelling room inhabited by this woman, she tottered away from him, and he heard her fall upon what he judged, in the darkness, to be a straw mattress.

"There's a table in the middle of the room," she said, feebly. "And there's a candle on it and a tinder-box. You can strike a light. I am dying."

Herndon groped about him and finally succeeded in lighting the miserable dip of tallow.

The woman lay upon a ragged mattress in one corner, of what they discovered was a most wretched apartment. Every thing denoted poverty and misery.

"What can we do?" asked the merchant. "It will not do to leave her alone, fast sinking as she is."

"I hardly know," hesitated Victor, removing his hat to wipe the perspiration from his brow.

Before they could speak further the woman uttered a stifled exclamation, and pointed her long, skeleton finger at the young man; while her haggard features began to glow in a lurid light.

"Water!" she gasped, at length, sinking back as if overcome by a sudden excitement.

Victor sprang to a cupboard which, till then, had escaped his notice, and where, fortunately, he found an old pitcher containing water.

This he held to her lips, and sprinkled her face at the same time.

She gradually recovered from her faint, and, fixing her dark eyes upon him piercingly, cried suddenly, in a hoarse whisper:

"It's the boy!—Victor! He had that tiny mole in the center of his forehead, and the same eyes—and—God! have I found him at last!"

She closed her eyes dizzily, and after a moment quickly said, interrogatively:

"Your name is Victor Hassan? Tell me—is it not? Say 'yes.' I know you. You are Victor!"

"That is my name," returned Victor, in surprise, rising, and going close to her, while Calvert Herndon also drew nearer.

"I knew it must be. God in heaven! this is a mercy! Young man, bare your arm!—bare it! Let me see. Is there not something pricked upon your flesh? Quick! show me."

Victor, bewildered at her mysterious behavior, complied with the request—baring his arm to the shoulder.

"Aha! there it is. There it is! You are Victor Hassan! You are the boy!" and she sunk back again upon the rough couch, laughing sepulchrally.

"Give her water, Victor—quick!" said Herndon, a burning curiosity now aroused within him to know what this form being could mean.

That which was displayed upon the young man's arm was a coat of arms, pricked in colors, and beneath it the words: "VICTOR HASSAN."

When the woman recovered from this second insensibility, Victor found voice to question her.

"What do you mean by this? What if I am Victor Hassan? Explain yourself!"

"Yes, explain your strange words," added Herndon.

"It's Victor Hassan; son of Harold, Lord Blair, Earl of —! How merciful is Heaven to ordain this before I died!"

"Son of Lord Harold Blair, Earl of —!" repeated they, together; and Victor continued: "Woman! do you know aught of my parentage? Speak."

Scanning his face with steadfast glance, she said:

"Ay, I do know of your parentage! What can you remember of your childhood?"

"Nothing," he answered, excitedly, now kneeling beside her; "not even she who gave me birth. I know when I played in the parlors of a comfortable home in America, where I called a gentleman and lady uncle and aunt. Beyond this, I can not recall a scene. They could never tell me of my parents. Speak, if you know—who was my father?—my mother?"

"It is the hand of God! I thought you must be dead; but I wasn't sure; and now I'm glad I got ready for this! So it's Victor? My little Vic, that I used to dance on my knee, and sing lullabies to—how strange!"

"Will you explain?" the young man interrupted, impatiently. "You say you knew my parents. Tell me of them! Heaven grant you may live long enough for this!"

"Listen." A strength seemed mustered within her that had lain dormant till now; and, seizing Victor's hand, she whispered: "My name is Sarah Marks. I was your nurse when you, a puny babe, kicked with your chubby feet, and struck about with your dimpled fists. It was nearly thirty-one years ago. How old are you now?"

"Thirty-one," he replied, briefly, leaning forward to catch her every word.

"Yes, that's right. Thirty-one. I told Madge, when I gave you to her, that if she ever parted with you, to be sure and pin a paper about you, telling your name—for very few people would ever find that name under your arm—and she did it. When I saw her, nearly twenty years ago, she said she had placed you in the entry of a grand house, closed the door, rang the bell, and left you forever. She—"

"My parents?" cried Victor, too excited to calmly hear this prelude.

"Your father was Lord Harold Blair, Earl of —; and your mother was a French lady, descended from noble blood. You are heir to—to—give me some water!"

Hastily drinking from the pitcher which he held to her lips, she continued:

"You are heir to the title and moneys, and estates of that nobleman. You are Lord Victor Hassan Blair, by birth, by the laws of England. Your place is usurped by my son! His name is Hallison. I did it all. Oh! forgive me for it!"

What did they hear? Victor Hassan direct heir to the title of Lord Harold Blair? Marvelous! They were mutually astounded. The young man doubted his ears. He gazed incredulously at the woman who called herself Sarah Marks. Herndon's astonishment was equal to his young friend's. Both were silent. Sarah Marks was panting for breath—struggling against the grip of death which was fast clinching upon her wasted frame.

"Woman! do you speak the truth?" Victor asked, when he could command his speech.

"Look upon me. Don't you see I am dying? Would I dare to lie in this awful hour? No, I speak truthfully. I was your nurse. I can prove what I say. I may die before I finish; but I'll try."

"Do not delay! Tell me all! Oh! I thank God for this strange occurrence, which is to tell me of my birth—my parents!"

"I have only a few moments left," said Sarah Marks. "Pay attention to what I am going to say. I will prove to you that you are of noble birth—I will tell you how to prove it to others."

More eager listeners never gave ear than did Calvert Herndon and Victor Hassan to the words of the dying woman as she began her story—a story in which lay the key to Victor's birth and earlier life, and on which rested the momentous import of his future destiny.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 59.)

At Bay;
OR,
THE BORDER HEROINE.

BY TOM KEENE.

IN a deep valley, situated in the very heart of the Blue Ridge Mountains, James Markham built the home into which he brought his young wife, and there commenced life amid the hardships and perils of the new country.

The house was of the most primitive character; huge, strong, unheaven logs formed the walls, rough clapboards the roof, and broad puncheons the floor.

For more than two years the young couple had lived in peaceful security, and there was nothing to indicate that it was not so continue.

One child had been born to them—a beautiful, fair-haired boy, upon whom they lavished even more than the love that parents usually bestow upon their first-born.

The Indians, in their wild raids when on the war-path, had passed by the secluded valley, and the far-famed and dreaded "Robbers of the Blue Ridge" had not yet shown themselves, either by act or in person.

And thus, from long-continued prosperity, James Markham had come to consider the run of his career and perhaps death as only the idle talk of imaginative people.

But from this dream there was to be a terrible awakening. The second winter had come and gone, and the mild breezes of spring were bringing the buds upon the elms, and causing the mountain slopes and sheltered valleys to put on their garb of green, while already, upon the southern face of the cliffs, wild flowers were timidly putting forth their bloom.

The winter had been an unusually hard one. Game had been scarce and wild, and, toward the end of the cold season, the pioneer would return empty-handed from the long hunt over the rugged hills surrounding his home. Even as he found difficulty in procuring game—and it was their main dependence—so did the Indians, and hence they were driven to make more extended inroads upon the settlements and isolated plantations.

But as much as the savages were to be feared, there were others who were becoming more dangerous still.

Somehow amid the fastnesses of the "Ridge" was located the head-quarters of as daring and as cruel a band of men as were ever leagued together for plunder, and murder when necessary, and from this quarter now came the danger that threatened.

The slanting rays of the evening sun were falling full upon the mountain-side as a horseman debouched into the narrow path from an adjoining thicket, and shading his brow with his open palm, gazed long and earnestly upon the lovely scene that lay below.

The rude log-house, with its outbuildings, were the only signs of man's presence in the valley, but these seemed sufficient to show the horseman that he was upon the right road.

"Ah! I thought so," he muttered, and without pausing further, he gave his horse the rein and began the descent of the hill by means of the bridge-path that wound among the rocks.

The way was somewhat difficult, but in half an hour the horseman, a young and handsome man, drew up before the gate of the pioneer's home.

The sharp barking of the house-dog called Mrs. Markham to the door, and instantly a cordial welcome, with a request to alight, was given the wayfarer.

The visitor proved to be agreeable, and, more than all, he bore news from the outside world, and it took but a short while for him to ingratiate himself favorably in the estimation of his hosts.

The shades of twilight were falling before the pioneer came in from the hills, whither he had been in unsuccessful pursuit of game, and though much surprised at finding so unusual a visitor, he, too, became quickly interested in listening to the stranger's talk, and it was late before their guest was shown to his sleeping-place in the further end of the building, where a small room had been partitioned off.

For a long time the pioneer and his young wife lay awake, talking of what had been told them by their chance visitor, but at length slumber came to them, and the house was wrapped in profound silence.

And now a singular scene could have been witnessed by one stationed upon the edge of the timber that came nearly up to the dwelling.

The little window that served to light the sleeping-room in which the guest had been placed, was gently raised, and the form of a man crept noiselessly out.

The quick, sharp bark of the ever-watchful dog was uttered but once. The sound that followed was as though a strong hand had suddenly grasped the animal's throat and stopped the utterance just as it was made.

A dull, heavy blow followed, and then a soft, low whistle, and instantly, from the shadow of the outbuildings, the forms of two men stole with noiseless tread to where the stranger stood waiting beneath his window.

But their movements had not been so stealthy but that a vigilant ear had heard enough to awaken suspicion. From constantly watching for danger, the pioneer had come to be ever on the alert.

The gasping of the faithful watch-dog as his life was being pressed out by the clutch of an iron hand, was sufficient to tell that something was wrong.

Noiselessly leaping from his bed, he took his rifle from the brackets above the fireplace, and was on the point of opening the door for the purpose of inspecting the yard, when a sudden thought seemed to strike him, and he turned to seek the stranger's apartment. As he passed the bed, he leaned his rifle against its foot, and with empty hands passed into the room.

We need not say that he found the traveler bed empty. A moment's scrutiny showed that it had not even been disturbed.

As he stood, with a vague suspicion of treachery stealing into his mind, the murmur of suppressed voices, so low that he fancied it might be the sigh of the wind, came from without.

To creep to the window, which was still open, was but the work of a moment, and then raising himself up suddenly, he leaned far out, that he might both see and hear, as the emergency might require.

The movement was a fatal one. Quick as thought a grip of steel fastened upon his throat, and dragged him outward, but ere the fingers closed he, with the thought of her always uppermost in his mind, managed to gather breath for the alarm. Only once the terrible word, "Murder," rung out, coupled with a word of caution, and their grasp settled down.

Three against one. The contest could but be brief, and less time than the poor wife, now frantic with terror, took in making fast the door, the husband and father lay bleeding from half a dozen gaping wounds, either one of which was more than enough to let out his life.

A few moments of silence, and then came the summons to open the door.

With a trembling heart, the wife, paying no heed to the demand, crept to the window from whence the assassin had emerged, holding in her hands the rifle left by her husband.

She was just in time. Slowly the heavy fur cap, then the forehead, and next a pair of glittering eyes rose above the window-sill.

Without a moment's hesitation, the little woman brought the heavy piece to her shoulder, and without aim, trusting entirely to chance, she fired.

Without a sound, the man dropped from view, with the bullet through his brain; but his place was quickly filled by another, who, knowing the gun to be empty, fancied he could gain easy access.

Upon the backs of the chairs, within the bedchamber, she lay the rifle-barrel, pointing it through the connecting door, and full at the threatened window.

Then, with a burning brand, she stations herself beside the wall, out of view, and waits for the next assault.

There is but a helpless woman within: her sole means of defense has been rendered useless, and there is nothing to bar the way.

So thought the villain without, as, with the spring of a panther, he leaps upon the window-sill, holding in his hand a heavy club with which to ward the expected blow.

But the blow that came, could not be so warded.

Even as the robber alighted, the wife applied the burning coal to the open pan.

A brilliant flash, a loud report, and the ball had sped truly to the mark.

With a yell of rage and agony, the villain fell, outward, upon the earth, where the others lay.

The long, long night wore away, and the blessed dawn at length appeared.

With trembling fingers, the anxious woman undid the fastenings of the door and ventured out.

A fearful scene met her eyes. Her husband, apparently dead, lay near the corner of the house where he had fallen.

Scarcely glancing at the others, the almost heartbroken woman dragged the insensible form within, and laid it upon the bed.

The assassin's knife had cut deeply, but not fatally, and although the time was long before he again went out to the hills, yet he did go again, and for many years, always happy to labor for his "Border Heroine," as he was wont to call her.

The Avenging Angels:

OR,
THE BANDIT BROTHERS OF THE SIOTO.

A BORDER AND INDIAN TALE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SILENT HUNTER," "QUEEN OF THE WOODS," ETC.

CHAPTER XIX.
THE SILENT CAMP.

That night Steve kept watch, and obtained from Martha, who was greatly exhausted, a succinct explanation of the judge's presence so near them.

His illness, she saw immediately after their departure, was more mental than physical, and, as soon as the slight paroxysm of fever was over, Mr. Mason calmly, but authoritatively, announced his intention of following in the trail of the Avengers.

Martha would have dissuaded him had it been in her power, but there was something in his eyes she did not like, and which showed her that the only safe course was obedience to his will, when at all events she would be allowed to accompany him.

Accordingly, she prepared a packet of provisions, while he was arming himself with his well-seasoned and long-tried heavy duck-gun, that would hold charges and shot of any kind.

In addition to this he took a brace of pistols, a knife, and an ample supply of powder, slugs, and ball which abounded in the cavern home.

Thus accoutered, the two started; the old man taking up the trail with wonderful good fortune, and keeping it with a tenacity which showed that his early education as a soldier, hunter, and scout, was by no means forgotten.

Martha trudged after him, partly impelled by her devotion to the family, and partly by her excessive fear of being left alone—a weakness common to the fair sex.

In this way they had, on the previous evening, come in sight of the Indian camp, when the judge waded the stream, and sought the snug retreat where they had found Martha nestled; from this, as soon as a frugal meal had been shared, he issued, with his monstrous weapon, to lie in wait, until a chance offered of putting either an Indian or a bandit to death, the two being confounded thoroughly in the old man's mind.

Martha further added that the judge was most uncommunicative. Altogether her meaning went so far as to insinuate that he was not exactly in his right mind.

Bidding the girl seek her rude pallet, and make no further remarks to any one, Steve glided from the clump of stunted oaks and crept down to the bank of the stream, aware that if the red-skins intended to attack them, they would do so somewhat before daylight.

A few minutes before dawn Steve picked up his ears as a low howl rose from the camp, followed by others, which became every minute louder and louder.

Clutching his rifle, the scout listened again, thinking that his ears must have deceived him. They were, however, too experienced for that, and next instant Steve rose to his feet, and, without precautions of any kind, he stepped into the water and crossed over to the Shawnee camp.

As he expected, it was wholly in the hands of the ravenous and hungry wolves of the prairie, which were scouring every corner in search of bones and offal. The Indians had disappeared, leaving not a shred behind.

The wolves slunk away as the tall figure of the trapper strode across the clearing, plainly indicating that no other man was near to interfere with them. Steve, in his own mind, had little doubt as to the cause of this fight.

In the first place the double attack, seconded by a mysterious third party of assassins, had doubtless made them consider the whole affair planned, while, in all probability, they believed the number of white men to be greater than it really was.

At any rate the Avengers and Bandits being to all appearance united, were sufficiently formidable to make the retreat of a party who were incumbered with women and children an act of prudence on the part of a careful chief.

Steve, however, searched every bush and thicket before he finally made up his mind, and then he sauntered slowly down the lake.

The sun now rose over the eastern side of the lake, and shed a flood of glorious light on the placid sheet of water.

At some distance were seen under the tall column-like trees a doe and buck, feeding on the lilies which were growing in the water close to the bank.

Steve, who knew the importance of fresh meat, was about to take aim, when he heard the faint sound of paddling, and turning, he saw Kenewa gliding slowly up in the canoe.

The scout waved his hand to him to pause, took a steady sight, brought down the doe, and then, rushing forward to secure his prey, he so started the buck as to make him spring forward and bury himself in the

lake, as he was accustomed to do to escape the ravenous wolves.

Started by the rifle-shot, the deer swam some distance in the water before discovering his new danger. No sooner, however, did he perceive the Indian in the canoe advancing upon him than he faced about as if to return from the water. But Steve stood up and waved his arms on high, which effectually cut off his expected retreat, and sent him back again into deep water, where he at once struck out obliquely for the opposite shore.

Kenewa advanced slowly, lifting his head to examine the distance, the buck swam past, raising his nose high in the air, curling the water before his slim neck like the beak of a gull, and throwing his legs forward and gliding along with incredible velocity.

"Strike out, Kenewa," cried Steve, from the shore, "it is a noble buck, and we want fresh meat. Lay out, man, lay out, or he'll escape you."

Kenewa simply nodded as each moment he increased the speed of his canoe. It seemed to dance on the waves, rising and falling with the undulations made by its own motion. The deer was about forty yards ahead, still cutting the water most bravely, and snorting at each breath with terror and fatigue.

As the boat neared him the noble beast doubled. But he was no longer breasting the waves with perfect command, but was struggling with the water, his back now rising to the surface, now sinking beneath it, as the waves curled from his neck.

Kenewa was now no longer the calm and thoughtful brave, but the excited hunter who thinks of nothing but the prey before him. His dark eyes flashed, his visage was all animation, his mouth curled with a pleasurable smile, as the canoe whirled with each fresh evolution of the chase. At times the deer, instead of trusting to cunning doubles and feints, took a straight course, as if to try fair racing with his pursuer. Then it was wonderful to see, the little bark skim over the water, soon forcing the animal to turn sharply round once more.

At last the buck turned toward the shore he had left, for which he made with his last energies, Kenewa following fast in pursuit.

"You've given him lake law enough," cried Steve; "shall I settle him—eh, Light-foot? Speak, or he'll turn like a snake."

"Ugh!" said the Sioux, as he shook his head; at the same moment the shot was fired, and the deer, lit in a vital part, was scarcely on shore ere he fell dead.

While this exciting chase was going on the whole of the Avengers had crossed the stream, and were now standing still, lest they should interfere with the deer-hunt. No sooner, however, was it over than they came up to see what was the meaning of an event which seemed to indicate that they were the sole tenants of the lake and its shores.

"Seems like it," said Steve; "the niggers must have thought we consorted with them robbers, and so they have made tracks to get out of our way."

"They must have a strange opinion of us," observed Roland, gravely, "to think that we could associate with those wretches, to gain an advantage whatever."

"Injane human natur', cap'n, ain't white human natur'; a red-skin will consort with white, blue, or black, to arrive at his ends; and he thinks we will, too. Howsoever, they've slid off, and taken the gals with 'em; so we're bound to have talk as to what is to be done. You, Tom, keep a look-out, while we take our morning meal; and keep your eyes skinned, my hearty, or you'll have your sculp floating on a pole in two days, afore you know it ain't a wig, which, Tom, I laugh, throw his rifle up into the hollow of his arm, and took his way to the top of a mound; there, crouching down, he could take a clear view of the whole environs of the late Indian camp.

The rest proceeded to seat themselves round the smoldering fire of the Indian brave, which was speedily replenished, and turned to good use in broiling venison steaks. The judge, with his heavy gun by his side, sat apart, and did not join in the discussion. He ate his morning meal with apparent calmness and composure, which, however, the glint of his eye thoroughly disproved.

"Captain," said Steve, when the venison was dispatched, "it is now mighty near time to be acting. What is your idea, sir, of the thing to be done?"

"Follow them to their fastness, if need be; any thing, so we recover the girls," replied the leader, with animated gestures.

"That's my idea, to a flint," continued Steve; "so the only thing is to toe the trail and see what it leads to."

"The lake among the Blue Hills," said Kenewa, quietly.

"Yes! yes! that's Injane natur'. He knows the way of the beasts, and I dare swear he's right, too; but, what say you, brave of the Hurons, shall we follow the trail?" continued Steve, laughing.

The Indian glanced imperceptibly at the judge and Martha.

"Right—always right," said Steve, uneasily; "well, what's to be done?"

"Gray-beard and squaw go down river, meet us at Blue Fork. Then we all go up river together to lake."

"But who's to paddle 'em, Indian? I want to follow the land trail."

"They have no enemy to fear," replied Kenewa; "we shall be ahead of them; they can travel as in the clearings of the whites."

Martha's father was an experienced backwoodsman, a good hand at the paddle, and a brave and careful man. It was, therefore, resolved that the canoe, repaired and strengthened, should, under his care, descend the stream—a branch of one of the tributaries of the Ohio—until they reached Blue Fork, where the smaller party were to secrete themselves in the woods until they had some certain sign of their friends.

The judge made not the slightest objection to this arrangement, but, still clutching his gun with intense nervous energy, he took his place in the center of the canoe, which crossed the lake to where the stream glided beneath the forest.

The other laborer who had followed the fortunes of the judge now started to bring up the horses, which had been left in a fertile bottom. He was successful in his search, except that one was missing from the number.

"Can those Bandits have been roaming about?" said Roland, "I wish I was within reach of the thief."

"Little Bear," replied Kenewa, with a dry smile, "he horse-thief."

CHAPTER XX.
LIFTING THE TRAIL.

The whole party were now mounted, save

Kenewa and Steve, whose horses were led, while they themselves moved forward on the trail as guides, keeping some distance ahead. The line of march of the Indians was, however, so clear and defined that soon all trotted forward at a good pace, the track of Indian march being quite visible from their seat on horseback, as soon as the forest was passed and the prairie reached.

About three hours after midday they reached a spot where the Shawnees had halted near a pool, pitching their wigwams under some trees that rose in solitary grandeur on the plain. They had, however, only paused to eat, and had again made tracks toward the hills, the blue outlines of which could be seen on the distant horizon.

On rode the gallant band, their eyes fixed on every inequality in the prairie, on every island of timber, and on every mound, in the hope that behind it might be concealed the enemy, of whom they were in pursuit.

Their progress became slower as darkness crept over the plain; the trail, too, was more difficult to follow, and hence their caution. The Indians, contrary to the usual practice when incumbered with women and children, had made forced marches, which of itself made the track tolerably plain. Besides, Kenewa had no doubt that a narrow belt of cotton and other trees, on the borders of a stream at no great distance, was the next halting-place.

His provisions were correct, for no sooner did they reach the skirt of the long line of timber, than they were able to trace the rude coral in which the horses had been placed, as well as the situation occupied by the Indians themselves. The shades of evening had fallen, and with them had come a dense mass of vapor in the shape of fog, which made shelter of some kind both agreeable and necessary. The wind blew unequally, sometimes sweeping heavily along the ground, then, rising into a shrill and mournful whistling, it entered the forest with a rush that filled the air with the leaves and branches it scattered in its path.

The horses were hopped—that is, their forelegs were tied together, in such a way that they could make very slow progress was impossible, and then all prepared for the night's camping out.

Huts were hastily erected, behind which to pass the night; but as all may not know the nature of these simple contrivances to guard against the wind, a brief description may not be out of place. Two sticks, with forks at their upper end, are thrust into the ground, out of which they stand five feet in height and six or eight feet apart. Then, on the side from which the wind comes, are placed, at a sloping angle, other poles, as near together as may be required, and on these are cast brush, grass, bushes—any thing, in short, that may serve as a wall to keep off the chilly blast.

A fire is then lit on the open side, and many a worse contrivance for passing a night out of doors may be hit upon. With some grass for a bed, and a log for a pillow, many and many a time have we thus slept, as comfortably as in our more pretentious bed within the four walls of a log-house.

As soon as everything was ready, and the evening meal had been consumed, Kenewa announced his intention of keeping watch that night; while Roland Edwards also declared he would do duty on this occasion. The Huron, who in all things yielded to his officer, bowed his head, and the two young men, between whom a great attachment had sprung up—perhaps because both were in love—moved away from the cheerful fire, to take up the arduous duty of sentries.

The post selected was the summit of a high bank that sloped upward from the forest, and whence they could look down upon the other bank of the stream, near which they had halted. Beyond was a prairie covered with high grass, then forest, and further still were pine-clad hills.

When the two had reached the summit and looked down, the stream was placid. The wind had subsided, and the tiny waves were following one another in succession. The clouds, as if wearied of their wild hurry-scurry, were breaking asunder, the heavier gathering in black masses above the horizon, while the lighter send still hurried along or eddied about the tops of the distant mountains. Now and then a red and fiery star could be seen struggling through the drifting vapor.

Roland fixed himself in the same attitude as the Indian; that is, he lay flat upon his face upon the sward, with his rifle close to his hand. For some time he was a rapt observer, his eyes wandering from the prairie to the stream and from the stream to the prairie, while his ear drank in all the many inexpressible sounds which came with the darkness upon those vast and extraordinary plains.

Kenewa lay like a log of wood upon the bank, his eyes to all appearance fixed on vacancy, his thoughts far away.

The "how-how-how" of the wolves was the only discordant note in the music of the night, which Roland listened to, under a kind of spell; his thoughts being far away, beside some smoldering fire, within view of which poor Ettie lay, disconsolate and lonely, but surely not thinking of him as he was thinking of her.

All this time Roland was peering out into the deep darkness, the red-skin for the nonce trusting to the sense of hearing as much as to that of sight. Midnight was approaching; that hour when all who are accustomed to regular rest feel more weak and weary than at any other time. Roland, it is true, was a soldier; still it would have been excusable had he fallen asleep at his post, considering the great and incessant fatigue he had undergone during the past month.

But he was determined not to yield, and though now and then his eyes were half-closed, he soon opened them again, and looked out upon the dismal starlit prairie. Presently, while the darkness was greater than usual, Roland fancied he saw a star glimmer very low toward the horizon. He watched it for a moment, and then rubbed his eyes to convince himself that he was awake.

Gliding slowly along, now up, now down, was a strange and fantastic light, which was clearly moving from south to north, as a will-o'-the-wisp might have done on marshy ground, or as a similar light plays about the yards of a vessel in a storm. He watched it with intense interest for some minutes.

Then he touched Kenewa lightly on the shoulder. The young soldier believed in his heart that the Sioux, tired by his many and weary journeyings, was asleep, but he never whispered his suspicion to any save one. Who that one was we may perhaps see.

"Wagh," said Kenewa, sitting up, with a yawn that nearly dislocated his lower jaw.

"Has my pale-face brother discovered any thing?"

Roland pointed, without a word, to the distant plain.

"Ugh!" cried the Sioux warrior, with a start, as he gazed at the light.

"Can you tell what it is?" asked Roland.

"or is it one of those lights we see in marshes in bad weather?"

"No—horse-thief—fire hunt—white robber—follow deer!" was the decisive answer of the young warrior.

"Shall we follow and cut them off?" said Roland Edwards, boldly.

"Five—six mile off," replied Kenewa; "prairie quite flat—see a long way—go, if captain say so."

"But what do you think?" asked the chief of the Rangers.

"Want to find trail of pretty ones in morning," was the only answer from Kenewa, who spoke broken English to Roland.

"Horse-thieves, sure there."

"Kenewa," said Roland, gravely, "you are about right; but, much as I desire to know which way the dear girls have been taken, I can not smother my hatred of these wretches. You stay to find the trail—I will follow these miscreants. Something warns me, Kenewa, my friend, that I shall act wisely in so doing."

"Good!" observed the red-skin, who, like all his race, had great belief in presentiments; "take Steve with you—prairie all like one—lose your way—never find white thieves."

"Your advice is good," observed Roland, "and I will follow it. Send him up here. I will wait."

Kenewa made some guttural and inaudible response, after which he glided back toward the camp for the purpose of finding Steve, the Scout.

CHAPTER XXI.
ON THE LAKE.

WHEN Humphreys received charge of the canoe in which the judge and Martha were to make their journey, he took counsel with Kenewa and Steve for some time after his departure, well aware that it would be prudent to follow whatever directions they gave him. They then embarked, and the boat shot across the lake, though the tendency was upward, or to the west, where the shore was most bushy.

Their course was continued close to the northern shore, until they reached a point of the lake where the shores were not more than a hundred feet apart, and as the bushes trailed in the water and the tall trees lowered above, it was scarcely possible, in the deep shadow, to detect any opening, but Humphreys soon felt, as the canoe slowly advanced, the sucking of the current, which bore them on beneath an arch of trees, through which the light struggled by casual openings. It was too good a place for an ambush not to make the forest wayfarers cautious, and all held their breath while Humphreys put his paddle in the water, using it only as a rudder, leaving the canoe to follow its natural impulses.

The canoe was kept in the middle of the stream as much as possible, though it constantly had to swerve to the right and left, as snags and other impediments sent it now one way, now the other. With this exception the day glided away unnoted. The movement of the boat was so even, the scenery so soft and placid, the air so balmy, that the hours passed like the scenes of a summer's dream, and night came before they were aware of its approach.

The canoe was at once stayed, as on the southern bank there was a dense forest of oaks, where they could conveniently halt. A spot without underbrush was easily found, and selected for the night encampment. The surrounding forest was so dense and the night so raw and chilly, that Humphreys did not hesitate to make a fire, both to warm their evening meal and to make a pleasant glow in that dark and dreary spot of the great prairie wilderness.

The canoe was hauled up, and being reversed, with a couple of forked sticks to support it on one side, made a very good night wigwam for Martha, the two men being quite satisfied with the arched roof of the forest for a shelter. As soon as supper was over the two men smoked their pipes, while Martha closed her eyes and fell into a dreamy doze.

When she rose from this the fire was burning low, the judge leaned asleep against the trunk of a tree, while her father, prostrate on the ground, emitted a volley of sounds that proclaimed him far gone into the land nod. The girl, rising and creeping from her shelter, put on some fresh wood, and composed herself at last to sleep, utterly unconscious that she had already slumbered for many hours.

Suddenly, close at hand, behind her, she heard a cautious but heavy step. Martha's heart beat wildly, while her ears were bent to catch the faintest sound.

Then the canoe was lifted bodily up from her!

Martha remained silent one moment more, and then, turning round, she saw Mike Horne, one of the gigantic Bandits, making off with the boat hoisted on his left shoulder.

With a wild shriek Martha rose to her knees.

"Stop, you wicked thief," she said; "put that down, I say!"

"Take that, you chattering magpie!" cried Moses Horne, discharging a pistol at her, and striking her on the arm.

Then as hard as he could he ran round the point of a thicket, and buried himself in the darkest and gloomiest part of the forest.

(To be continued—Commenced in No. 55.)

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MY STUDY.

BY JOE JOE, JR.

The first thing that your eyes behold
On entering, is dust,
Which falls alike, so it is said,
On the uniform or just;
Then seated on a three-legged chair—
The other got knocked out—
You see me looking very grim
For things to write about.

I sit beside a desk that's full
Of scribbled odds and ends,
Fair half beginnings of great things
That promised excellence—
That promised much, but came to naught,
Quaint songs, heart-stirring odes,
The former by the basketful,
The last by wagon-loads.

A lamp upon a crumpled stool
That reels and is unsteady,
An almanac and calendar
To tell when meals are ready;
A dictionary little used,
And yet it has its back off;
A paper-knife that's difficult
At times to keep the track of.

Some books, not very new at best,
And neither very many,
With treatises on Saving Grace,
And some to save a penny,
Some novels on the grand plan,
And rather mediocre,
Wherein the heroine leaves the man
To marry golden lure.

Upon the mantel you will see
Rare things of choice—broken,
Presented to me years ago,
And each is Friendship's token,
There is a one-eyed dancing girl,
Her dainty foot she shows off,
And there's Napoleon looking sad
Because he has nose off.

And there is General Washington
With one good eye and one looking,
And there's the Duke of Wellington
Sick, for his skull is cracking,
And that Newfoundland terrier hound
You see, as ran his head off,
And all the spots upon his back
He has begun to shed off.

That old arm-chair beside the grate,
Although it is cut and broken,
I can not say it ever belonged
To that queer knight, Miles Standish,
It once belonged to my grandpaw,
The only thing he would me,
And that's the reason his demise,
So sudden, nearly killed me.

That pencil sketch of New York Bay
Is very fine and very looking,
I drew it all myself, that is,
I drew it at a lottery,
And many more things you might see
Within this room of glory,
I'll let this future sheriff give
A better inventory.

The Loyal Dwarf.

A STORY OF CROMWELLIAN DAYS.

BY CAPT. CHARLES HOWARD.

THE sanguinary struggle upon the plains of Naseby, resulting in the irreparable overthrow of the cavaliers, established the supremacy of Oliver Cromwell, and sent the captive king to the block.

Dying as became the king of a great people, Charles thought that the immolation of royalty personified would appease the wrath of the Iron Man; but the future proved that kings do not always guess right.

"We must extirpate royalty," said Cromwell, and accordingly, head after head of the king's fast friends and tried supporters dropped into the gory basket.

Among the many loyalists marked by the stern Protector for the block, stood Sir Guy de Courcey, an open supporter of the king, and a bitter denouncer of Roundhead misrule. His was the fairest estate in the realm, and he the lover of Editha Surrey, the beautiful heiress of Mossland, once the country seat of kingly ancestors.

The wedding-day of the happy couple was, according to mutual agreement, near at hand.

Far from London, where the headman's ax was doing the red bidding of Cromwell, Sir Guy forgot his danger in the smiles of his betrothed.

Distance failed to baffle the emissaries of the Lord Protector, for the night before the wedding, the loyalist was arrested in his own castle and taken to London.

An immediate trial succeeded his arrival at the capital, and the sentence of death fell upon his ears in the silent watches of the night.

"To the circular dungeon with the traitor!" thundered Cromwell, who had witnessed the farcical trial. "Deliver him over to Saul, the keeper of that lightless place. Day after to-morrow I will see the miscreant die."

Without having been permitted to speak a word in his defense, Sir Guy was hurried off by two soldiers toward the tower, from whose gloomy recesses his king had lately walked to the block.

The cavalier was conducted down several flights of steps leading into the bowels of the earth, until he found himself in a damp corridor.

"What, ho, Saul!" shouted one of the guards, and from the gloom which the torch failed to penetrate, a hideous creature bounded to his side.

"A bird for the iron cage, Saul," said the soldier, nodding toward Sir Guy.

"A bird, a bird! ha, a king bird!" hissed the mountain-backed dwarf, snatching the torch from the roundhead's hands, and thrusting it into the prisoner's face. "The king-bird's cage is empty, and Saul has no one to taunt. Come," he cried, throwing wide the massive steel door, "enter into the darkness prepared for the king and his traitors. Thou canst cleave the blackness with thy sword, and erect a throne of gloom. Ha! ha! ha!"

Glad to escape the fiendish cackling of nature's abortion, the doomed cavalier sprang into the dungeon, and the door closed behind him with an unearthly clang.

Locking the door, Saul delivered the ponderous keys into the hands of the soldiers, who bore them to Cromwell. To doubly guard against the escape of Charles' trust advocate, the Protector would hold the keys himself.

Immersed in the almost palpable gloom of the circular dungeon, the young cavalier dwelt upon his situation. He thought of the eternal blazing of his own and Editha's brightest hopes. Never, alas! he thought, would he fold her to his heart a blushing bride; never again hear the voice that was fairy-like music to his ear.

Oh, it was maddening to think thus. In his frenzy he darted forward, thinking of freedom and Editha.

He brought up against cold and clammy plates of polished iron. He turned and walked in an opposite direction. Iron again! The dungeon floor was iron, and his was an iron couch, devoid of straw.

Upon the latter—the only furniture the cell contained—Sir Guy threw himself, completely exhausted, and Morpheus closed his weary eyes.

Hour succeeded hour and still the prisoner slept. Suddenly he was awakened—he knew not what.

The floor of his prison seemed to be gradually settling—noiselessly, yet surely—deeper into the earth.

Sir Guy sprang from the iron bed! His senses had not deceived him—the floor was perceptibly settling.

Deeper and deeper, until at last the silent movement ended, with a shock that stunned the cavalier.

What would come now? The mental question was answered immediately. An iron door flew open in his very face, and the dwarf stepped to his side with a flambeau.

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed Saul, noticing Sir Guy's astonishment. "King-birds seldom take flight into the womb of the earth, don't they, Sir Guy de Courcey? Hark! I hearst not thou the rush of icy waves? They toss about a boat which waits for thee."

"For me!" cried the cavalier. "Saul, what meanest thou?" Again the dwarf laughed.

"Editha wears the bridal robes," he replied, at length. "Come, come, Sir Guy, to thy wedding."

"The dwarf is crazy," murmured the prisoner, "but I will follow him. And if he seeks my life, by the blood of the king I will plunge my good blade into his body. If I have to die, I want to perish like my king—upon the block."

"Come to the bridal," cried the dwarf, with manifest impatience. "The minutes fly, and soon Editha will doff the bridal jewels. Saul will not betray thee. He wept an ocean of tears when the martyr Charles died."

Without hesitation Sir Guy followed the dwarf, who closed the iron door after them. The chamber in which the cavalier found himself was filled with strange machinery, which lowered and elevated the floor of the circular dungeon.

"This is the work of these hands," said Saul, pausing a moment, for the purpose of elevating the floor to its true place. "I also constructed the dungeon. Cromwell and his minions know naught of this chamber. When the king was condemned, I impounded the warden of the Tower to place him in the circular dungeon; but he would not. I would have rescued Charles, even as I have rescued thee."

While the dwarf was talking, he and Sir Guy were threading the underground corridors, leading to the Thames.

At last a gust of cold wind fanned their faces, and a moment later they stood upon the banks of the historic river.

A boat lay at their very feet. The loyal dwarf sprang into it and seized an oar. Sir Guy followed his example, and without accident gained the opposite shore.

To his astonishment, he found a horse tethered at the water's edge.

"Mount and ride to thy bridal," said Saul. "The night is far spent, and with the dawn the door of the round dungeon will fly open. But Cromwell will find the nest of the king-bird empty; ha! ha! ha! But go, Sir Guy, and God go with thee!"

Embracing his deformed deliverer, and throwing a purse heavy with golden guineas at his feet, the cavalier mounted the fiery steed, and rode off like a blast of Boreal wind.

He spared not horseflesh that night, and managed to reach Mossland against dawn. Weary with waiting for her lover, Editha had just doffed the bridal robes, and the disappointed guests were departing. Sir Guy's arrival changed the aspect of affairs. Editha resumed the gay habiliments, and the ceremony was performed.

Well aware of the fact that his escape would soon be discovered, and that he would be pursued, Sir Guy fled to France the day after the wedding, accompanied by his bride.

Cromwell was amazed at the escape of his enemy, and the search which he instituted revealed the secret chamber; but before he could arrest the loyal dwarf, the brave fellow was crossing the channel in an open boat.

He subsequently rejoined Sir Guy on French soil, and when England's crown rested upon the head of Charles the Second, returned to his native country with the happy pair.

Camp-Fire Yarns.

Old Dave Arnold's Yarn.

BY RALPH RINGWOOD.

"STANDIN' sentry, boyees, ar' lonesom' bizzness, ennyhow, er ennyways, but I tell you that I onc' stood sentry under sarcumstances—er rather under suthin' else as war a dang sight wuss—thet would 'a' made one uv you youngsters wish yew war at home 'longside uv mammy. I yid war.

"You see, 'twur durin' the 'cold winter,' es we all calls it—the year '47, you remember—an' mean' Bunk Conley, an' sum more uv the boyees, war over in Painter Run, ar' beaver.

"The Injuns war awful thet winter, fur you see, ther warn't no game; 'twur all frozed out, an' so the imps war continerly on the rampage arter suthin' to eat, an' the like.

"We had our camp in a clump o' timmer 'longside uv the run, mebbly as much as fifty yarf off, but clost enough to make it easy fur water.

"Well, boyees, I little thought thet that 'ere little sarcumstance would be the means uv savin' Old Dave's ha'—I means the crick—but it war, an' I'll tell you how it war.

"Airly one mornin' one uv the lads kim 'tarin' into camp with word thet he hed seed a passel uv buffer over onto the side uv the range, an' es rump-stake hed been a sca'cety, the whole lot uv 'em war fur litin' out arter 'em immediately.

"Off they went, leavin' me to look arter things 'bout ther camp, as it chanced to be my day fur thet duty.

"Ther warn't much to do, 'cept lookin' arter my old pea-shooter, an' I soon had her in order, an' then I stretched out fur a nap. I must 'a' slep' powerful, fur when I woke up the sun war high down, an' no sign uv the boyees.

"Thinks I, the bufflers ar' skittish, an' hev g'n' 'em a race fur it, an' with thet I picks up the tin an' starts down to ther run to git some water.

"You see, the ice war on, an' thick, too, an' we hed cut a squar' hole into it so es to make it handy.

"Wall, I got down to the crick, an' war jess stoopin' over to scoop up a tinful, when I chanced to throw my left eye down the run to ards the timmer below the camp, when what sh'd I see but the greasy top-knot uv a red-skin bobbin' up an' down behind a musket-bush.

"The imp hedn't seed me, thet I know'd, fur he war watchin' the camp, thinkin', I reckon, thet whoever war about war thar, an' nowhar else. I know'd I war in a fix, fur ther warn't a bush, nor a rock, nor nuthin' thet I could git fur cover closer'n twenty er thirty yarf, an' to break an' run fur it war sartin death.

"Jess then I seed another one on 't'other side uv the camp, an' I knowed the place war sarcumvented all roun'.

"You see, the way the boyees kim to not run into the trap war, they diskivered the trail an' smelt a mice, an' went back arter the soldiers thet war camped over at Live Oak Valley. 'Twur lucky they war thar, er else my standin' sentry wouldn't 'a' did no good—which it didn't ennyhow, es fur es I could see."

The Fatal Arrow.

BY CAPT. "BRUIN" ADAMS.

"Yes, stranger, thar ain't no mistakin' the fact that them Seminoles fou't better, an' fiercer, an' longer, considerin' ther' numbers, nor did enny set of people on the airth afore or sence."

The foregoing positive assertion was made by an old hunter, Lank Brady, as we slowly floated down the St. John in his dug-out, on our way back to camp after a pleasant day's hunt.

We had been talking of the Seminole war, and I soon saw that the old fellow's admiration for the tribe who had once trod the soil as its possessors, was as genuine as it was unbounded.

He looked upon them as great warriors—men who fought and died rather than yield, or suffered such hardships as would have made death preferable—and respected them accordingly.

"But, they was like all Injuns, an' they would take advantage of ye, if they could. Look yander, stranger; do you see them old mounds and piles of rocks and the like? Well, that was onc' a kind of a fort for the sojers when the war was goin' on, an' right thar, or clost by, I seed a Seminole chief play the slickest dodge thet ever got into a human critter's noddle."

"The fort was a right smart chance of a affair, had a couple of brass cannon, and mebbly as munny as five and forty sojers to garrison her. The thing was built to pucture the river, whatever that mout 'a' meant, but, accordin' to my thinkin', it had all it could do to pucture itself."

"You see, thar ain't no timber close 'round, thet belt yander, which you see on the rise, bein' the nearest, an' it's about a mile, I jedge."

"Well, twic' a week a party of the sojers would take the axes and go over to the timber and chop wood enough to last till next time, when they'd go ag'in. They al-

"I was standin' percisely on the place whar all the sojers had drapped, and was gazin' round, idle like, and thinkin', when I diskivered thet I could see the corner of the log-pen whar the dead Injun lay, and that, from thar to whar I stood, was a clean openin' through the bushes about a foot wide. Thar wasn't even a twig in the way."

"Now, this mout 'a' been nateral; I've seen munny sech, but, somehow, it didn't look so. I went to work and examined them bushes, and soon saw whar a limb, here and thar, had been cut smooth off. Then I goes to the pen an' looked for signs, an', sure enough, thar was a trail, but a powerful light one, leadin' away from the place in a opposite direction."

"That was enough for onc't, an' arter kiverin' up my tracks—they was different from the sojers, you see—I went back and told the major to keep still, that it would be all right."

"The second mornin' arter that was the reg'lar wood day—they called it—an' I told the major to send the men out as usual, and I would see they didn't—none of 'em—get hurt. Well, the night afore, or 'twur nigh mornin' bein' about three o'clock, I crept outen the fort and went over to the thicket."

"I had picked my tree before, and so didn't have no trouble, but went right up the big palm, clear to the top, and got into a fork among the big leaves."

"From whar I sot, I had a perfect sight of the pen whar the dead Injun was, and that was jess what I wanted."

"Day broke at last, and by and by the sun got up fairly, and afore long I saw the sojers come marchin' outen the fort."

"What puzzled me was, that I hadn't seen my game yet. As soon as 'twur light I never took my eye offen the pen, but still nary a livin' thing had I seen."

"I begin to think that thar wouldn't be no fun that day, and so turned round and watched the sojers, who, by this time, had got a'most up to the turn in the road."

"I could see 'em gettin' skittish like, and the way they did roll ther heads around and watch was a caution!"

"But, they had got orders to march straight ahead, as if they warn't afeard, and I will say that they did first-rate."

"As the head man come up to the crook, I sorter turned, and throwin' my rifle forward, fixed my eye onto the pen."

"And I warn't none too soon."

"First I saw a board sorter raise up, as if somebody was pushing his back ag'in it to lift it off, and through the crack I ketched sight of a brown arm, and a minnit arter I saw the arder poke out between two of the logs."

"That was it, an' it was jess as I had guessed it was."

"The Injun was inside the pen and did his shootin' from thar."

"But, I did mine first, for, jess as I saw the arder draw back, I let drive through the crack at the vill'in's shoulder, and from the yell that follered, I know'd I hadn't missed my aim."

"By the time I had slid down, the sojers war all round the pen, and when they pulled off the top, thar war two dead Injuns in thar."

"I went to work to find the imp's hidin' place, an' whar do you think it war? Why, right under the dead Injun, who, you know, is allers kinder lifted up offen the ground."

"Thar was a place mebbly a foot and a half high, an' in thar he would crawl arter shootin' a sojer, an' lay still untill they'd all clared out."

"Now, that's what I call a slick dodge; but, it took a mighty brave man to perform it."

Beat Time's Notes.

THE last load of wood which I got, got me. They should use it on the Erie road for the purpose of making steam, for ninety-five parts of it are water. The last warm day my wife put some of it in the kitchen stove and it nearly froze us all to death, and she made the ice cream in the oven—it was a regular refrigerator. There was a cord of wood in the first place, and to kiln-dry it, by piling it up and making a fire under it in the yard, I burned three cords and a half of better wood. If I had enough of it I would build the best fire-proof house in the State. I should think that it had been drying at the bottom of the Atlantic ocean for the last twenty centuries, with rain falling all the time. The thermometers in our neighborhood are all down to zero, and that wood has chilled our neighbors against us. I don't know that I shall ever meet the man I bought it of on this earth again, for I verily believe that, after selling it to me, he went into the wilderness and hid his face from the sight of men, but I remember him in my prayers, praying that the wood which will contribute to his amusement after he dies may be better seasoned than this he sold to me.

I WAS one day traveling in a foreign land when an elephant got after me, and I ran up a tree; then that rhinoceros climbed up one side of the tree and I climbed down the other; when that lion came down after me and gave chase, and just as that tiger was about to spring at me I dodged, and that leopard went clear over me; then that kangaroo got up and made at me again, and gaining on me that wolf caught my arm, when I struck the monkey with a club and he let go, and the dog having one eye knocked out by the blow I gave him, came on again, and by another blow I knocked that cat's tail clear off, but the rat didn't mind it but made another charge, and with one fell swoop I mashed that bed-bug flat, from a split pancake, so I did.

THE young man who made a mistake and put a love-letter addressed to his girl in the letter he sent to me, is earnestly requested to send stamps and I will return the same. The sentiments of the letter are pure, no doubt, but the grammar is bad, and needs thrashing like blazes. It is about like all the other love-letters that come to me (by mistake) and contains about as much love as, if brushed up into a dust-pan, would stock a Mormon elder. It is so tender! still, if the postal department is very careful, it might not fall to pieces before it would reach its original destination, though it would be a little old; but love knows no dates. The next letter you write I would advise you to send to the House of Correction, and by no means send it to me, as my wife is now at home!

If any man thinks himself a "horse" I would advise him to hitch himself to a wheelbarrow and have the conceit taken out of him.

BEAT TIME.



THE LOYAL DWARF.